# EDWARD FITZGERALD
AND
# BERNARD BARTON

*Edited by*

F. R. BARTON

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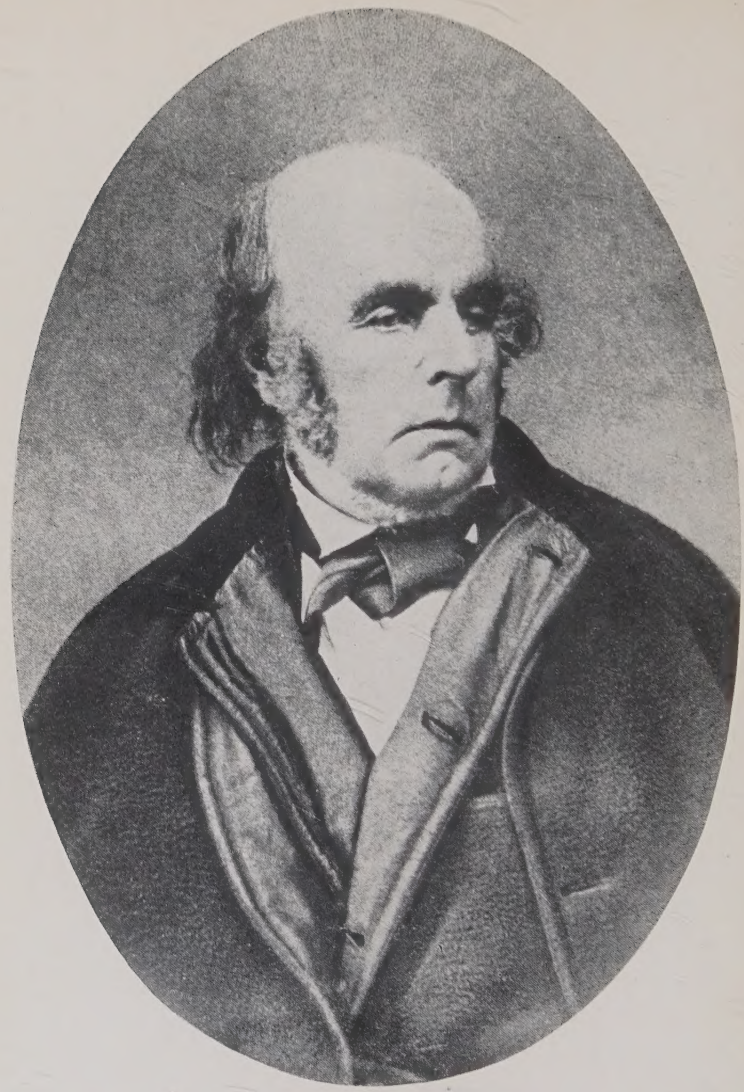

Edward Fitzgerald

# EDWARD FITZGERALD
AND
# BERNARD BARTON

Letters written by FitzGerald
1839–1856

Edited by
F. R. Barton, C.M.G.

With a Foreword by
Viscount Grey of Fallodon, K.G.

*With Two Portraits*

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# FOREWORD

MANY years ago my friend, Captain Barton, made a manuscript copy of some letters of Edward FitzGerald which had not been published. At that time Captain Barton was much abroad and he left the MS. with me during his absence.

These letters have therefore been long familiar to me and other of his friends. Some of them have recently appeared in *Scribner's Magazine*, and they are now published all together in this volume.

Captain Barton has written all that is needed in the way of comment or explanation, and I have nothing to add to his notes. Those who know the letters of Edward FitzGerald will find nothing unexpected in this latest batch, but they will find here the same traits and qualities that have endeared his letters, and their writer, to so many. What are these qualities? They are so well known to all who delight in Edward Fitz-

Gerald, and yet it is difficult to say what they are.

Appreciation of FitzGerald is like something very intimate which we know to be part of ourselves, but just because it is so intimate we cannot analyse precisely. We can express thoughts when it is difficult to express feelings, and appreciation of FitzGerald is a matter of temperament and feeling rather than an intellectual process. Indeed we cannot appreciate him unless we love him.

Some of the charm, I think, is due to the complete and absolute detachment of his comments on men and affairs. He took no hand in what was passing, and he was without any desire to take a hand. To read him is to become an onlooker with him; to withdraw from the crowd and press of men and things. And in this there is a repose that becomes ever more grateful as the inventions of science speed up the pace of life. Certainly FitzGerald is one of the writers to whom we are grateful, because they give us a sense of leisure and repose.

But there is something that is more peculiarly FitzGerald's own; there is his humour—that best kind of humour which finds its material in

the dullest, most trivial, or most ordinary things. Even Boulge becomes a lovable name when FitzGerald associates its sound with the quality of stiff clay.

I fear I do not know Spedding's *Life of Bacon*, but to read that Spedding is in London trying to wash his blackamoor white brings a wave of kindly feeling for both Spedding and Bacon which perhaps does more for them than the reading of the whole book. Certainly Spedding himself is endeared by FitzGerald's affectionate humour. He saw Spedding's forehead in every milestone; he imagined sailors in the Channel hailing it by mistake for Beachy Head. Spedding can never be an entirely solemn figure; FitzGerald's humour will always be playing, like summer lightning, upon him.

It is, indeed, the humour that endears both the object and the humorist. Never was humour more free, I dare almost say so free, from desire for effect, or from anything forced; from any striving of any kind. But when all is said about his humour, there remains the final word that it was Edward FitzGerald's.

Whence comes the touch of wistfulness in his letters? Not, I think, from disappointment or

longings unsatisfied. The wistfulness is there. Did it arise from a sense that he did not feel sufficiently concerned about men and affairs, and would have liked to feel more deeply? He was in the world, not of it; and was this the secret of his complete detachment? Is this the explanation of his being, more and more, content to write to friends and to live apart?

In one of his letters here published he gives a poignant account of the death of the man whom his sister loved, and then come these words: "I wish I had a stronger sense of these affections." Was this feeling of something lacking in himself always present to him when he thought of friends whom he loved, or of events that moved the world and left him unaffected?

The letters given here will suggest these same questions, just as do those already known to us, and without providing an answer.

But, after all, do we really want them answered? There is a sense of kindly mystery about FitzGerald, and we don't want to account for him. We are glad to have him as he is.

GREY OF FALLODON.

LONDON, October, 1923.

# EDWARD FITZGERALD AND BERNARD BARTON

I

# EDWARD FITZGERALD AND BERNARD BARTON

## INTRODUCTION

Among the letters written by eminent authors of the last century, none probably are read more often and with keener relish than those of Lamb and Edward FitzGerald. It would be straining hope to expect that any more of Lamb's delightful letters may be forthcoming, and the likelihood that we might enjoy a further store by FitzGerald has year by year grown less since the publication of *More Letters* in 1901. By a stroke of good fortune, however, it has happened that some sixty letters of his, hitherto unpublished, have come to light, among them being a few addressed to him by other distinguished men of his day. Whether these letters passed through the hands of FitzGerald's literary executor—the late W. Aldis Wright—is a question that cannot

now be determined. Probably they were never seen by him, for notwithstanding that their average worth in point of interest is perhaps scarcely on as high a level as those published in 1894, it is inconceivable that he should have rejected them all. Some, we may justly suppose, Mr. Wright would have printed, had they been accessible, if only for their individual charm; others for their value as connecting links in the story of FitzGerald's life, and some, again, for the sake of the glimpse they give into the recesses of his mind.

Mr. Wright has stated in his preface to the 1894 series that it was no part of his plan to form a complete collection of the letters, but rather to let the story of FitzGerald's life be told in such of them as afford an indication of his character and pursuits; further, that he only refrained from publishing others lest he should "incur the reproach of having given more than enough." There is just room, therefore, for conjecture that these letters were among those which Mr. Wright withheld from publication in the first series, but if this were so it is strange that he should have failed to include them in *More Letters*, published seven years later; for by that time FitzGerald

Bernard Barlow

had taken his place among English Letter Writers.

The point may be interesting, but it is a trivial one. Whether his literary executor saw them or not is immaterial. The fact fortunately remains; these sixty letters have been saved from destruction, and no apology for their publication need be made.

Bernard Barton, to whom the present letters are addressed, can be no stranger to the large body of readers who take delight in the letters of Lamb and FitzGerald, for it was to the worthy Quaker who bore that name that these two humanists communicated many of their richest and least premeditated fancies. But though his name may be familiar enough, there are probably few who remember aught else of him. To serve such readers, therefore, a few lines descriptive of Barton's life and his relations to FitzGerald will not be out of place.

Bernard Barton was born in the city of Carlisle in 1784. His ancestors were Cumberland statesmen who owned a small homestead at Ivegill, a hamlet in that county. His grandfather (after whom Bernard was named), having an inventive and enterprising turn of mind, devised

an ingenious piece of machinery, with the result that he left the pleasant dale of his forbears to set up a small spinning factory in Carlisle. His only son John inherited the business, but as the life was not congenial to him he sold the factory, married a Quakeress, and himself became a member of the Society of Friends. These were Bernard's parents, and true to their religious convictions he too lived and died a Quaker. He married while young, and had but one child, Lucy, whose mother died in giving her birth. During the last forty years of his simple, uneventful life father and daughter lived together in Woodbridge—a quiet little country town in Suffolk—he a clerk in Alexander's Bank, while his daughter managed the affairs of their small household. During his lifetime Bernard Barton earned no little fame as a poet. His artless verses appealed in particular to that urbane class of persons of the period whose religious scruples forbade to them the enjoyment of livelier, more ardent, poetry. As an instance of the cautious attitude maintained towards the Lyric Art by the stricter Quakers in the early part of the last century, the dismal appeal embodied in the following lines may be cited:—

"Addressed to Bernard Barton some time previous to the writer being aware he was likely to publish his late volume of excellent Hymns.[1]

Bard of the East, take up thy Lyre,
  Wake yet nobler, sweeter strain,
Religion, Nature both inspire,
  And Feeling cannot plead in vain;
Thy intellectual path maintain
  With all the fervour Mind can give,
And may no earthly tinge, or stain,
  Upon thy hallowed pages live."

The truth is, although Barton was possessed in some measure of the qualities of mind necessary to the making of a poet, his Quaker conscience

[1] Lamb, in his letter to Barton dated February 7, 1826, praised these "excellent Hymns," which were published that year in a volume entitled *Devotional Verses*, but found fault—in his most delectable manner—with Barton's incurable habit of going out of his way to belittle things mundane. Following some lines portraying Abraham's complaisance when the Patriarch was directed by Jehovah to sacrifice his son Isaac, the poem continued:—

Brief eulogy, yet more sublime
  To every feeling heart
Than all the boast of classic time
  Or Drama's proudest art;
Far, far beyond the Grecian stage,
  Or Poesy's most glowing page.

Alluding to this stanza, Lamb wrote, "I do not quite like whipping the Greek drama upon the back of *Genesis*. I do not like praise handed in by disparagement."

drove him always on a tight rein. In private nobody enjoyed more the simple good things of this world—good fellowship, comfortable surroundings, the plain pleasures of the table—but when he put his thoughts and feelings in print he was constrained by the tenets of his sect to exhort men with tiresome iteration to project their minds to the tomb and the world beyond. Lamb in one of his letters upbraided him for composing too many poems on the deaths of infants and reminding their parents of the resurrection. "Do children die so often and so good in your parts?" he wrote. The solemnity of the subject, he told him, grows trite and stale by repetition. But sometimes Barton used his ever-present vision of the world to come to give point to a pretty metaphor, as is testified by the following verses, written about the year 1832 and hitherto unpublished. The lines were addressed to a contemporary, the Reverend W. Kirby, who was a highly distinguished botanist and entomologist.

I know not which to envy most
Thy knowledge of the insect host
Tenants of Earth or Air;

Or thy acquaintance with each scene
Of barren heath or meadow green
To which their tribes repair.

The first has cast around thy name
A purer and a happier fame
Than e'er was won by arms;
Thy second must have taught thy heart
Somewhat of wisdom's better part
Through Nature's hidden charms.

For every Science, Love, or Art
Which tends to foster in the heart
Knowledge of Nature's Laws,
Must, sanctified by Grace Divine,
Precept on Precept, Line on Line,
Exalt their first Great Cause.

Pursue then, my ingenious Friend,
Thy search; and may'st thou in the end
Partake a prouder change
Than e'er thy insect tribes can know,
Whate'er of Beauty these may shew
In Transformation strange.

For these, though plumed with splendid wings,
Are still but fair and fragile things
Which seem but born to die;
Whilst Thou, thy web of knowledge spun,
Shalt soar above yon glorious Sun
To Immortality.

In Barton's poems it was the sober manner of expression of his love of Nature and of all things of good report that took Lamb's fancy. "I like them for what they are, and for what they are not," he said; "I have sickened on the modern rhodomontade and Byronism, and your plain Quakerish beauty has captivated me." FitzGerald shared this impression. We have it in his Preface to the *Letters and Poems* which appeared soon after Barton's death. "Some of these little poems," he wrote, "recall to me the inscriptions in the *Greek Anthology*—not in any particular passages, but in their general air of simplicity, leisurely elegance, and quiet, unimpassioned pensiveness." And seven or eight years later, in a letter to Mrs. Cowell—who was then about to leave England for Calcutta with her husband, Professor Cowell (FitzGerald's mentor in Persian)—he wrote: "Remember to take Barton's little Book with you to India: better than many a better Book to you there!"

Making full allowance for a bias due to Lamb's affection for Quakerism, and for FitzGerald's sense of loyalty to his friends—a faculty he possessed in such large measure that some of his critics have been fain to regard it as a frailty

—there can be no doubt that both men were sincere in what they wrote. It must, nevertheless, be apparent to anybody who has had the hardihood to peruse Barton's poetical compositions that they are not of a kind likely to have excited any personal interest in Barton the individual. To what qualities of his mind are we then to attribute the affection evidently felt for him by Lamb and FitzGerald—an affection which shows constantly in their letters? I venture to think that we shall not be far wrong if we pronounce this vibrant chord of affinity to have been humour—humour in its purest form—that rare compound of fellow-feeling, gentleness, and understanding: the whole leavened by a sense of kindly fun. To quote FitzGerald again: "He was equally tolerant of men, and free of acquaintance. So long as men were honest, (and he was slow to suspect them to be otherwise,) and reasonably agreeable, (and he was easily pleased,) he could find company in them. . . . Many will long remember him as he used to sit at table, his snuff-box in his hand, and a glass of genial wine before him, repeating some favourite passage, and glancing his fine brown eyes about him as he recited."

A portrait of Barton, finely executed in chalks —seen in profile—drawn by Samuel Laurence in 1847, lays strong emphasis on the lively and humorous sparkle in the eye and on the sensitive mouth; the face has a look of whimsical alertness one would scarcely expect to find in the features of the author of *Poetic Vigils*.

FitzGerald and Barton appear to have become acquainted with each other in 1836—two years after Lamb's death. FitzGerald's parents were then in residence at Boulge Hall, near Woodbridge. To this country house at that time Edward FitzGerald came to live, having left Cambridge five years earlier. Even so soon in life—he was but twenty-seven—the habit of seclusion was already taking hold of him, for in the following year he left the Hall and took up his solitary abode with his pictures and his books at a cottage in the home park. This cottage was to be his *pied-à-terre* for sixteen years. Here it was his wont to entertain his neighbouring friends of an evening—Barton the bank clerk and poet; George Crabbe, vicar of the adjoining parish of Bredfield; Thomas Churchyard, the Woodbridge lawyer, amateur artist, and picture fancier; and others—the "Woodbridge wits," as they were called locally.

During the succeeding ten years Barton and FitzGerald were familiar friends, meeting often at the house of one or the other to read favourite books together, and to discuss new ones, or to criticise each other's latest acquired picture; and in the intervals—when FitzGerald was away from home—they would keep in touch with each other by letter. Barton died suddenly in 1849 at the age of sixty-four, and seven years later FitzGerald married the Quaker's only daughter.

F. R. Barton.

London, October, 1923.

# LETTERS WRITTEN BY EDWARD FITZGERALD

1839—1856

# Letters Written by Edward FitzGerald

LONDON. *Saturday.*
(*November* 25, 1839)

MY DEAR SIR,

I am not indeed coming down to Boulge direct just yet: but I hope that ten days more will see me clear of London—perhaps at Geldestone—and it will not be long before I come Woodbridgewards then. As to Kerrich's drawing, it will bide its time, being in good keeping—

Your verses on Assington Hall I had not only seen and read—but even bought—for passing through Cheapside the other day I saw the print up at a Stationer's window, and for old acquaintance sake went in and bought the Pocket book—

I have got Alfred Tennyson up with me here, and to-day I give a dinner to him and two or three others—It is just ordered; soles, two boiled fowls, and an Apple Tart—cheese &c. After

this plenty of smoking. I am quite smoke dried as it is—If you drop in you shall be welcome—

I asked young Spring Rice[1] about your *Dream Verses*—he believes that his Father shewed them to the Queen. R. M. Milnes, Esq., M.P. sent her a sonnet, which she said she was very much obliged to him for, but she couldn't understand it—We went to Windsor a fortnight ago (did I tell you this before?) and saw her, and the Castle and the pictures—The Vandykes are noble indeed—And what say you to Nelson's Bust on the mainmast of the *Victory?*—

I have bought few new Pictures since I last wrote, and hope I have done now with the Trade for this season. But who can resist, when one sees a thing hanging outside a Pawnbroker's shop, like fruit ready to fall into one's lap,—for a pound or two? The most prudent of my purchases is—an *Umbrella*—

Monday. I could not finish my letter on Saturday, and here I sit down to it again—still more smoke dried and two-o'clock-in-the-morning-fuddled than before—I want A. T. to publish another volume: as all his friends do: especially

[1] Charles Spring Rice, son of Lord Monteagle.

Moxon, who has been calling on him for the last 2 years for a new edition of his old volume: but he is too lazy and wayward to put his hand to the business—He has got fine things in a large Butcher's Account Book that now lies in my room; but I don't know if any would take you much. A Sir Somebody Hanmer[1] is said to have published some pretty poetry lately: or as Spring Rice calls it inversely "potery"—We are all reading Carlyle's *Miscellanies*—some abusing: some praising: I among the latter. I am glad to hear that nearly all of the edition that came from America is sold. Carlyle has got a horse and rides about Chelsea, and he has improved his digestion wonderfully—An accumulation of undigested matter is worse than an unsold Edition—Dear me, I haven't seen you since I have been in Ireland—A man has just come from Italy, and he stood on one of the Alps and saw at once the moon rising over the Adriatic while (the) sun sank into the Mediterranean—That was a neat sight.[2]

You do not mention Miss Barton: but I conclude she is with you, and trust she is well.

[1] Sir John Hanmer; published *Fra Cipolla and Other Poems* in 1839.
[2] Probably Savile Morton.

Will you be so good as to remember me to her? And now farewell again for the present.

Ever yrs

E.F.G.

In 1842 Thomas Carlyle was the guest of Charles Spring Rice's elder brother Stephen on a yachting trip to Ostend. In his *Journal* Carlyle describes the appearance of Spring Rice the younger, who was dressed in the fashionable yachting garb of the time—a word picture as vivid and as comical as any of Leech's contemporary pen-and-ink sketches. "The good Charles had a low-crowned, broad-brimmed glazed hat, ugliest of hats, and one of those amazing sack coats which the English dandies have taken to wear, the make of which is the simplest. One straight sack to hold your body, two smaller sacks on top for the arms, and by way of collar, a *hem*."

The poem which Lord Monteagle may have shown to the Queen is one called *Dream Verses*. It is the subject of the final sentence in FitzGerald's *Memoir of Bernard Barton*, and he gives to this conclusion the tenor of one of those mellifluous drawn-out cadences which he now

and again brings into his prose writings with exquisite effect.

"And in the poem called *A Dream*—a dream the poet really had—how beautiful is that chorus of the friends of her youth who surround the central vision of his departed wife, and who, much as the dreamer wonders they do not see she is a spirit, and silent as she remains to their greetings, still with countenances of 'blameless mirth,' like some of Correggio's angel attendants, press around her without awe or hesitation, repeating 'welcome, welcome!' as to one suddenly returned to them from some earthly absence only, and not from beyond the dead—from heaven."

A yet more beautiful example of FitzGerald's art in prose modulation is the well-known conclusion to *Euphranor*, the tender grace whereof haunts the memory with an enduring charm.

"Then, waiting a little while to hear how the winner had won, and the loser lost, and watching Phidippus engaged in eager conversation with his defeated brethren, I took Euphranor and Lexilogus under either arm . . . and walked home with them across the meadow leading to the town, whither the dusky troops of Gownsmen

with all their confused voices seem'd as it were evaporating in the twilight, while a Nightingale began to be heard among the flowering Chestnuts of Jesus."

The following letter is undated. My reason for assuming it to have been written in 1839 is based upon the following incident. In a letter[1] to Barton dated Oct. 20 (1839), written at Halverston, in Ireland, the residence of Peter Purcell, FitzGerald's uncle, we read: "We were all going on here as merrily as possible till this day week, when my Piscator got an order from his Father to go home directly. So go he would the day after." "Piscator" was FitzGerald's name for W. K. Browne, the son of Alderman Browne, of Bedford. What Browne had done, or left undone, to provoke so peremptory a summons from his parent is not told.

(HALVERSTON)
(*November*, 1839.)

DEAR BARTON,

My friend Mr. Browne of Bedford is just about to go off as Surveyor of Taxes to Carlisle[2]

[1] The *published* letters referred to throughout these pages are those comprised in the second edition of *Letters of Edward FitzGerald*, edited by William Aldis Wright, and published in 1907.

[2] Barton's birthplace.

—"the city of pleasant waters" as you called it in language more suitable to Cheltenham or Harrogate. Do you know any good folks in that part of the world? Poor fellow, he leaves his old home because his screw of a father won't do anything for him, and cannot be grateful enough that he has begotten a Gentleman. He would have him live on a shilling a day—Henceforth I have no one to call me to the dear old Ouse—bless its idle windings—farewell to Turvey, and Olney, and all the pretty places. Hang me if I couldn't cry, and spit in the face of old Browne at the same time—I will marry or go hang—It is wrong to talk this way: but really the old gentleman has

> "Like a base Indian thrown a pearl away
> Richer than all his tribe."[1]

For is not the heart of a Gentleman (N.B. not an Esquire) better than the whole Art of Skinning Flints as practised from the earliest ages.

When do you go to Norwich—I shall perhaps pass through it the very end of this week or the beginning of next on my way to Cambridgeshire.

E.F.G.

[1] *Othello*, Act V, scene ii.

It is seldom that FitzGerald's temper became so stirred as to cause him to write rudely about any person. He seems to have felt strongly that an injustice was being done to his friend and he was fain to express his vexation and disgust. Whatever the cause of the friction between father and son may have been, nothing serious seems to have come of it. Browne did not go to Carlisle, and in the summer of the following year we find FitzGerald at Bedford again, happy with Piscator and whiling away the time among the rich water meadows and pollard willows that mark the windings of his beloved Ouse.

*To Bernard Barton*

(London, 17 *February* 1840)

My dear Sir,

You will by this time, I dare say, have seen Isabella, who will have told you of my abode &c. for the last month. I expect to be at Boulge very shortly, as I have some things to do there: and I shall be very glad to see you again—Why it is a long time since we met—I left Lusia certainly better at Hastings: and a note I had from her this morning tells me she has been

walking about at the rate of 2 and 3 hours a day —I really liked Hastings very much: more than any watering-place I ever was at. The seas were very high. I am now come to London to see my friends, to go to a play or two (from which wicked and foolish amusement I am not yet weaned), and to abstain entirely from buying either books or pictures (money failing)—If I can pay my lodgings, and for a place in the Pit once or twice I shall do—I went last Saturday night to see a new play by poor Leigh Hunt,[1] who has at last done something to put a few pounds into his pocket. His Play is very pretty, though not so dramatic as to ensure any long success on the stage:—it is very well acted— Poor L. H. is delighted with his new friends the Actors—When I got to my lodgings, I found A. Tennyson installed in them: he has been here ever since in a very uneasy state: being really ill, in a nervous way: what with an hereditary tenderness of nerve, and having spoiled what strength he had by incessant smoking &c.—I have also made him very out of sorts by desiring a truce from complaints and complainings— Poor fellow: he is quite magnanimous, and noble

[1] *A Legend of Florence*, produced at Covent Garden in 1840.

natured, with no meanness or vanity or affectation of any kind whatever—but very perverse, according to the nature of his illness—So much for Poets, who, one must allow, are many of them a somewhat tetchy race—There's that great metaphysical, Doric, moral, religious, psychological, poet of the Age, W. Wordsworth, who doesn't like to be contradicted at all: nor to be neglected in any way.

Well, my dear Sir, you are made of a happier compound, and take the world easily—Your nerves will not irritate you with a sense of neglected genius, if I do not quite fill up this sheet to the end—Prepare yourself: take a little bottled Porter if you have it: I am going to end: no offence intended: now are you ready?—quite ready?—Well then, I am ever yours

E. FitzGerald.

The playful gibe at Wordsworth contained in the foregoing letter may have been suggested by a letter written some years previously by the Lake poet to Barton. In 1815 Barton had written to Wordsworth and enclosed some verses in which he warmly expressed his disapproval of Jeffrey's notorious "This will never do" criticism

of *The Excursion*.[1] The calm self-assurance and stiff, didactic tone of the reply is surpassingly Wordsworthian. FitzGerald had doubtless seen, and been amused by, Wordsworth's letter; it may indeed have prompted the term "Daddy Wordsworth," as FitzGerald was wont to call him. Wordsworth wrote:—

RYDALE MOUNT,
NEAR AMBLESIDE.
*Jan* 12. 1816.

DEAR SIR,

Though my sister during my absence has returned thanks in my name for the verses which you have done me the honor of addressing to me, and for the obliging letter which accompanies them, I feel it incumbent on me, on my return home, to write a few words to the same purpose, with my own hand.

It is always a satisfaction to me to learn that I have given pleasure upon rational grounds, and I have nothing to object to your poetical panegyric but the occasion which called it forth. An admirer of my work, zealous as you have declared yourself to be, condescends too much when he

[1] In the *Edinburgh Review* for November, 1814.

gives way to an impulse proceeding from the Edinburgh or indeed from any other Review. The writers in these publications, while they prosecute their inglorious employment, cannot be supposed to be in a state of mind very favourable for being affected by the finer influences of a thing so pure as genuine Poetry—and as to the instance which has incited you to offer me this tribute of your gratitude, though I have not seen it, I doubt not but that it is a splenetic effusion of the Conductor of that Review, who has taken a perpetual Retainer from his own incapacity to plead against my claims to public approbation.

I differ from you in thinking that the only poetical lines in your address are "stolen from myself." The best verse, perhaps, is the following,

Awfully mighty in his impotence,

which by way of repayment I may be tempted to steal from you on some future occasion.

It pleases me though it does not surprise me to learn, that, having been affected early in life by my verses, you have returned again to your old

Loves after some little infidelities which you were shamed into by commerce with the scribbling and chattering part of the world. I have heard of many who upon their first acquaintance with my poetry have had much to get over, before they could thoroughly relish it, but never of one, who having once learned to enjoy it, had ceased to value it or survived his admiration—this is as good an external assurance as I can desire that my inspiration is from a pure source, and that my principles of composition are trustworthy.

With many thanks for your good wishes, and begging leave to offer mine in return,

I remain, dear Sir,
respectfully yours,
Wm. Wordsworth.

Bernard Barton, Esq.,
*Woodbridge,*
*Suffolk.*

Holbrook
(*Oct* 1840)

*To Bernard Barton*

Dear Sir,

The faith of man!—it is proverbially bad —I cannot get home till Monday: and the sun of toasted Cheese must set for this week—But next

week it shall arise anew, and warm us with redoubled ray — "Foul impious man" &c. Crabbe—toasted Cheese—Gin and Water—what else is wanted but a Pipe—to complete the perfect Square of comfort. One night, devote your little room to *that:* let it be said for once—

Farewell. Ever yrs

E.F.G.

LONDON. *January 20/41*

DEAR BARTON,

About my 2nd (that is, smaller) Constable, I can say nothing, because my friend Laurence has in a manner secured the first refusal of it. Besides I would not again let you purchase a picture without your seeing it first, and your friends seeing it:—perhaps I shall bring both my Constables into Suffolk: and then we will pro and con like monkeys together. The 2nd is far inferior in style to the large one: but it is a scene that might please you better: certainly a more Suffolk scene: and it has some things in it as good as can be—the sky, especially—It is about 2½ feet high by 2 feet wide: and very handsomely framed. Laurence it was who made me buy it: in fact, he would have bought it him-

self had £7 been lying useless in his pocket. So you see I am bound to him in a way.

You don't say whether you wish to have your Poacher framed or unframed. I told you the terms. He must always be worth £2 I think to some one:—though I should not buy him at any price for my own pleasure: nor would I a real Poacher hung up in my room. It is not a pleasing object. But tastes differ—The dealer had clapt £1 more upon him on my 2nd visit: but still offered to stick to the old price if I was minded to buy. How these devils know how to tempt unwary souls. Can anything be conceived more likely to exalt one in an instant to buying-pitch? Consider of it, and see to what temptations your poor friend is exposed. I am going again to-day to look at some pictures for auction at Phillips'—Oh Lord, Lord.

All my friends, who have visited me in due form after my accouchement of my new Constable, are pleased to express their conviction of the beauty and value of my darling. Why, I say again, don't you come up here for 2 days and see all these things? Surely you can take charge of some great bag of gold by the Coach, being paid travelling expenses.

As to our money matters, we will settle all when we meet. You bought some things for me at the Bazaar, did you not?—

I had some men here last night—we toasted cheese and drank ale and smoked—and they seemed merry. Alfred Tennyson has written to announce he will pay me a visit here: and I have written back to stipulate that it shall be a very short one.

I am going to have my big Constable framed!—

Ever yrs E.F.G.

P. S. My dear Barton, keep these letters of mine to yourself—let us fool it only between ourselves.

*The Poacher* is a picture frequently mentioned in the letters of this year. Barton thus describes it (as well as the portrait of Stothard mentioned in his letter of April 24/41) in a letter to Miss Charlesworth, an old friend of Barton and FitzGerald (who afterwards became the wife of Professor Cowell):

"They were picked up by E. FitzGerald in his exploratory visits to brokers' shops about town. One is a portrait of Stothard, the painter, by

Northcote, a careless, hasty, oil sketch, but very effective and pleasing, being in truth, a speaking likeness of a benevolent, happy and intelligent-looking gentleman of between sixty and seventy. . . . The other, Edward will have to be the portrait, by anticipation, of Bill Sykes, in Oliver Twist. I call it Peter Bell! The fellow has, I own, a somewhat villainous aspect, and his arms are brought forward in a way that conveys a fearful suspicion that his hands, luckily not given, are fettered. His elf-locks look as if they had never known scissors but had been hacked away with a blunt knife; his upper lip and all the lower part of the face cannot have been shaven for a week, yet there is a touch of compunction about the full, dark, and melancholy eyes, which will not allow me to pronounce the fellow altogether bad."

19 Charlotte St.
Rathbone Place.
(*April* 1841)

Dear Barton,

Have I not sent to Flook's Stationery warehouse over the way, and bought one Quire of Bath Post—and paid a shilling for it—(for they don't like trusting lodgers)—and have I not

turned away from the fire to the table, and devoted the end of a pipe, which was consecrated to the Spirit of inactivity, to the inferior calling of letter writing—all for the sake of writing a letter to you?—I have. My Father tells me that you were not well enough to dine with him last week. Now this is not as it should be—Your sound heart should have a sound body to dwell in, Mr. Barton; and in short it is not proper that you should be ill. Seriously, you should take exercise: walk even half an hour in your garden up and down, with a book, or (better still) with a pipe as a companion: you should eat and drink little—except when t-s-t-d cheese is on the table—and be careful of what you do eat and drink—and then you would be well, I am sure: your sound head and heart would do the rest. One can't afford to lose the full use of good men in this world—Now "be by your friends advised, too rash, too hasty Dad"—

I am afraid you will be much disappointed with the Constable sketch when you see it: but I have found nothing else that seemed in your way: and I don't like to ransack the pawnbrokers' shops without giving you a specimen of my doings. Three doors off me is a Constable which is worth a

journey from Woodbridge to London to see: it is a large one—of Salisbury Cathedral. It was bought at his sale for £200: and the owner adds £100 to its value every year, he tells me: he now wants £600— It is worth it: being as fine as Rubens. It ought to be in the National Gallery. Why don't you come up here and see it: I can give you bed and board.

It is not yet certain when my sisters will go down to Boulge. I am trying to make my Father keep them in London till Xmas: which, I am sure, would be better for them both: but I know not if I shall succeed. When they go, I shall not be long in following. If we do not go down yet, I will send you your picture: which will do very well to hang in your bedroom: it is not spick and span enough for your state sitting room.

I saw a portrait by Sir Joshua Reynolds so tender and delicious that it almost brought the tears into my eyes—A Lady, with a little child clinging round her neck, passing through a wood: to the left, the branches opening, and the golden Autumn light peeping in. It seemed like the type of all that is fair and gentle and transitory —A. Tennyson and I pass some hours together every day and night: with pipes and Brandy and water—I hope he will publish ere long. He is a

great fellow. But he is ruining himself by mismanagement and neglect of all kinds. He must smoke 12 hours out of the 24—

We are enjoying very fine London fogs, of the colour of sage cheese. Red herrings are very good just now: don't you like them?—Isabella[1] has become a great Oxford Divine: she attends matins, vigils &c. but she does not fast, which would do her more good than anything. This is the chief news of the day.

Now write to me and tell me you are well, and moreover taking measures to keep so. It is possible I may run down to Bedford to-morrow for 2 days: but all depends on what my Papa decides and also on the state of the weather. Please to make my respects and remembrances to Miss Barton: and believe me ever yrs

E.F.G.

The picture of Salisbury Cathedral which he mentions with so much enthusiasm is probably the picture now hanging in the National Gallery in London. Constable died in 1836; he had therefore been dead five years when this letter was written. FitzGerald possessed a fine eye for

[1] One of his sisters.

a good picture, and his judgment was unswayed by conventional taste. This picture of Salisbury Cathedral is a typical example of Constable's defiance of the conventions of his time. To us, whose eyes have become accustomed to the Barbizon school of painting (which Constable begot), FitzGerald's criticism might seem obvious, but as coming from an amateur over eighty years ago, it is remarkable. Other letters of his also testify to his fine appreciation of Constable's landscapes, such, for instance, as the bright spark of criticism he strikes in his letter of the present series to Barton dated January, 1842. "A fresh Constable with the dew on it . . . all the freshness of colour is required to give the freshness of Landscape." It is true that he seems later to have felt misgivings as to whether the earlier painters were not right in the restraint they imposed upon themselves when they painted landscape; or was it owing, perhaps, to his Irish blood that he had swung so far round in his opinion when he wrote as follows to Frederic Tennyson three years later?

"I like pictures that are not like nature. I can have nature better than any picture by look-

ing out of my window. Yet I respect the man who tries to paint up to the freshness of earth and sky. Constable did not wholly achieve what he tried at: and perhaps the old masters chose a soberer scale of things as more within the compass of lead paint. To paint dew with lead!"

Dew, which he twice calls to mind in discussing Constable's art, is a substance which made strong appeal to his poetic temperament. He loved it for its purity and freshness. Thus, in writing to Barton from London in February, 1842, he used it to point a pretty contrast: "In this big London all full of intellect and business I feel pleasure in dipping down into the country, and rubbing my hand over the cool dew upon the pastures, as it were." And in the following month when he was about to leave London for Boulge, he wrote again: "I suppose I shall find the banks covered with primroses, the very name carries a dew upon it."

LONDON. *Saturday.*
(*April* 24. 1841)

MY DEAR BARTON,

I was at breakfast with my Father at Portland Place this morning when your letter came—In walking back to my own lodgings I

have laid out twopence sterling: 1d on a bunch of wall flowers which inspire something of the salubrious country air into this d—d heavy smutty atmosphere—and the other 1d on a pen: with which I may, and do, indite an answer to you—For know, that my heart warms to old Suffolk after this short absence from it—I hate this place—have a confused headache &c.—But this is all personal and offensive—However I can't get back to Woodbridge till Saturday, I believe—I should like well to see your brother: you must make him stay a week with you.

There is a grand article in the new Edinburgh against Newman and Tract 90—not a very good article: what Truth is in it is true, as you may imagine: but it need not have been told. Newman is doubtless a humbug: but Plato expressly asserts that all wise governors may lie a little, seasonably—This is a doctrine which the wiser Egyptians would have kept esoterically, and involved in symbol—

I spent yesterday in walking about in the wet to my favourite pawn brokers — Nothing very bad to be got just now. A sketch by Constable—£3—quite genuine—and not a bit the better for that—Shall I buy you a capital head of Handel by Sir Joshua's master, Hudson—£30?

I think seriously of buying the head of an old man for £1. The owner assures me it is the portrait of Stothard[1]: that some of that painter's family came into the shop and identified it. Now why did they not buy it?—

Then I went to see the Gallery of Modern Painters in Suffolk St. a sort of sham Exhibition. There was one delicious picture of Jacques sitting by a stream "under the shade of melancholy boughs" contemplating the wounded hart who comes to die there. The branches meet close and dark over his head and far down the river: only at the extremity the forest ends, and you see a glimpse of level pasture land all sunshine—Then there's Miss Helen Faucitt,[2] all in black velvet, with a little bit of jessamine in her bosom, which makes one fall in love with her—And lots of pretty things besides. In another hour I shall be again on foot picture-hunting. There is such an odd picture of Christ and his Apostles to be got for £3—so quaint, ugly, and solemn—They are all dwarfs, and very ill made. Yet there is more in them than in West's and Westhall's[3] 5 foot 10 imperturbables.

[1] Afterwards bought for Barton by FitzGerald.
[2] The actress, afterwards Lady Martin. [3] Historical painters.

The wind is South West too: how much better for lounging than yesterday's North East.

Enough of this chapter—and farewell

E.F.G.

I trust Miss Barton is better—much better.

Like most great artists, FitzGerald possessed the faculty of recalling to his mind the broad features of a scene rather than its detail; consequently when he quotes from memory his quotations are not always exact. Jacques sitting "under the shade of melancholy boughs" is a case in point. The scene he had in mind was doubtless that one depicted by the First Lord in his lines addressed to the Duke in Act II, scene i of *As You Like It*:—

> To-day my lord of Amiens and myself
> Did steal behind him, as he lay along
> Under an oak, whose antique root peeps out
> Upon the brook that brawls along this wood,
> etc. etc. etc. etc.

The words quoted by FitzGerald occur actually in another part of the play, and are spoken by Orlando to the Duke when—seeking food for his old servant Adam—he stumbles upon the Duke's party just as they are about to begin their meal.

. . . But whate'er you are
That in this desert inaccessible,
Under the shade of melancholy boughs,
Lose and neglect the creeping hours of time.

*As You Like It* was a favourite play of FitzGerald's. The fresh atmosphere of the forest, the life of careless ease free of pomp led there by the banished Duke and his friends; their kindly human ways; and withal the shrewd though melancholy philosophy of Jacques that sharpens the story—accorded with FitzGerald's own peculiar temperament and outlook upon life. The phrases and incidents in the play became indeed so deeply graven upon his mind that in at least one instance he seems to have transmuted a line taken therefrom for his translation of the *Rubaiyat.* I refer to Jacques' reflections on the seven ages of man in Act II, scene vii, beginning: "All the world's a stage" and ending "Sans teeth, sans eyes, sans taste, sans everything." The progression of thought expressed in one of Omar's verses runs nearly parallel to Jacques' reflections. Omar's lines, freely translated, are as follows: "Beings are like bright sparks, they live, love, hate and drink; they empty here a glass or two, and are then extinguished, drowned in the dust

of eternity."[1] FitzGerald takes the Western and the Oriental expressions of the same idea, fuses them together, and produces the exquisite gem

Ah, make the most of what we yet may spend,
Before we too into the Dust descend;
Dust into Dust and under Dust to lie,
Sans Wine, sans Song, sans Singer, and—sans End.

39 Norton St.
Portland Place
(*May* 1841)

My dear Barton,

You know what I think about your book—you go on the principle of gathering together all you can of hitherto unpublished; I should select about one third of all I had ever published—So, we shall never agree. But I wish you peace and success in all things—

I have bought a shilling print of old Stothard, which proves the genuineness of your portrait. I will bring it down with me for you—Some splendid pictures were sold at Christie's on Saturday. I bid for an admirable little sketch by Wilson, and had not courage to go beyond £6. So I did not get it, and am sorry now.

[1] *Omariana*, H. G. Plimmer (privately printed), p. 16.

Two small finished Gainsboro's went for over £30 a piece. They were not of his best kind.

Tell Churchyard that if he comes to London, I can shew him a Constable as good and as large as Salisbury Cathedral. He may buy it for £600—which is just £400 too much for it. And the best Morland I have ever seen for £25—not very large—but of capital colour and character—I mean *capital* for the man; who is no very capital performer to my thinking.

I have been so busy in attendance at Portland Place[1] that I have seen but little of my friends. Now I mean to have a week's holiday with them. I have not lost a very fair month in the country; May is but a young month, and a sad coquette. April is scarce out of the nursery and one expects her to be giddy; but May ought to know better. Ever yrs

E. FitzGerald.

At midsummer in this year (1841) he was at Geldestone. The following amusing letter relates how from there he had gone to Norwich, and thence had himself carried, willy nilly, by coach to Lowestoft—a distance by road of 30 miles from town to town.

[1] His father's town house was in Portland Place.

(Lowestoft. *June* 17 1841)

My dear Barton,

I met Reynolds[1] in the street here to-day. We shook hands, and spoke of you: I said that you had given up writing, and were, I supposed, in a rage: if Quakers can rage except in verse; where what is called poetic rage is not only venial, but even advisable. Reynolds says you are not angry: neither did he look so himself: he was going off to some school or missionary meeting—Neither am I angry—why should I—?—So none of us are angry—Why should we?—

How did I get here?—Why I left Geldestone yesterday to go to Norwich: when I expected Donne[2] to carry me back to Mattishall: no Donne came: so, after sitting 7 hours in the commercial Room I got up on the Coach by which I had set out, and vowed in desperation that I would not descend from it till it stopped. It stopped here at the sea—I was satisfied: I felt that it could not reasonably be expected to go further—so here have I spent the day: and like a naughty boy wont go home to Geldestone quite

[1] The then Rector of Woodbridge.

[2] An old school-fellow; then living at Mattishall in Norfolk: afterwards Librarian of the London Library, and after that Examiner of Plays.

yet. Such fine weather: such heaps of mackerel brought to shore: pleasant flippant Magazines at the Circulating Libraries—above all an Inn to live in! After living some time at my brother in law's expense, there is something very refreshing in launching out at one's own—

I have been reading the account of the Life and the Death of Elizabeth Cullingham—a Pilot's Daughter—written by the Clergyman here—the Revd. F. Cunninghame—And now I shall conclude: without making any remark on that work: except that it costs 6d—No, I wont conclude till I have said that I dont mean the last sentence in satire: quite the contrary: for E. Cullingham was a very good girl: and died more happily than I shall dine perhaps—

But goodbye—I expect to go to Ireland in 10 days or so—shall probably return to Geldestone to-morrow—

Reynolds tells me Miss Barton is well: present her my congratulations:—

Ever yrs
E.F.G.

FitzGerald went to Ireland and remained there throughout the last part of the summer. A

published letter to Frederic Tennyson dated July 26, 1841, tells of some of his doings there, and contains FitzGerald's well-known opinion on sonnets.

"What do they seem fit for but to serve as little shapes in which a man may mould very mechanically any single thought which comes into his head, which thought is not lyrical enough in itself to exhale in a more lyrical measure? The difficulty of the sonnet metre in English is a good excuse for the dull didactic thoughts which naturally incline towards it: fellows know there is no danger of decanting their muddy stuff ever so slowly: they are neither prose nor poetry. I have rather a wish to tie old Wordsworth's volume about his neck and pitch him into one of the deepest holes of his dear Duddon."

In a later letter of the present series we shall see with what degree of success FitzGerald himself handled the sonnet form.

Bray, near Dublin,
*August* 8/41

My dear Barton,

This comes to tell you I am alive—though not wholly well:—having cold &c.—But colds

were made for vulgar souls—Here we are in the land of potatoes: having had little but rain, as I understand has been the case with you in England. I am fidgetty about the harvest there: how is it, after all this wet?—We are now staying at this very pretty place: it is 10 miles from Dublin, upon the sea, and half encircled with the Wicklow mountains—The country is quite beautiful, very varied: and, if I lived much in such places, I should find it hard to bring myself down to the level of Suffolk. This is literal, as you will perceive, and not metaphorical. I am half inclined to travel into the West of Ireland—Galway and Connemara—wild, mountainous, places, bounded by the Atlantic—the ancient abodes of minor kings, still retaining the ruins and wild manners of 2000 years back—I am struck more and more by the Southern, or even Eastern, character of the people even in these parts. I say again, and over and over again, that the English should travel in Ireland—

I make a good many sketches in my walks here: they are said not to be very intelligible to other people—When I was in London, I bought a very clever sketch said to be by Constable—unlike any I have seen of his: but as good—I

gave £2 for it: which is my ultimatum—I have read nothing except some novels since I saw you: and a little Dante, who goes well with these black mountain tops—I look with scorn upon Martlesham Hill.[1] I see out of my window the sea, which would be the Atlantic if it hadn't mistaken its way up the Irish Channel: and Bray Head—this kind of thing: (a pen and ink sketch) up which Isabella and Mrs. Amy Gunn tried to scale yesterday: but it was not to be: they slipped suddenly, and rolled over each other—and so thought it best to descend.

Well, I am going to-morrow to hear O'Connell speak in Dublin: five days hence we go to my brother's: then I am going to see old Miss Edgeworth—and I shan't be back in England till the beginning of September. I shall commission you to buy me some things at the Bazaar: among them, some copies of yours, and the Major's books. I am really sorry not to be at the Bazaar. Is Mr. Harding going to leave Woodbridge? Let me hear from you: direct to me at the Imperial Hotel Dublin "to be called for."

Ever yrs
E.F.G.

[1] A lowly eminence in the flat Suffolk landscape.

FitzGerald does not appear to have been impressed by O'Connell's oratory, for in none of his letters written about this period does he make any mention of his fellow-countryman's speech. It happened to be the year when O'Connell held Office as Lord Mayor of Dublin, a period during which he paused in his lifelong agitation for the repeal of the Union. For this reason, perhaps, the subject on which he spoke on this occasion was not one to call forth his great power of appeal to the emotions. Four years later Carlyle heard him in Dublin. What *he* thought of the Irish patriot he expressed in his most forcible style in a letter to FitzGerald, which will be found a few pages further on.

From Ireland FitzGerald went to Naseby Hall in Northamptonshire, one of his father's estates. The summer had been unusually wet and FitzGerald's sympathetic mind was agitated on behalf of his farmer friends lest their harvest should have been ruined by the rain. The weather improved in late autumn, and having seen the harvest safely gathered in FitzGerald went to London.

The hobby of picture-hunting was strong in him at this period. He seems to have done little

else in the hours of daylight during his ensuing visits to London but go the round of the picture-dealers, auctions, and pawnbrokers' shops seeking bargains. Sometimes he was accompanied on these quests by his artist friend Samuel Laurence, and from him he doubtless acquired a knowledge of the technical secrets of the art of painting. He even persuaded Alfred Tennyson to go with him to one of the auctions.

LONDON: Decr. 24/41

DEAR BARTON,

I am just going off to Brighton to visit my mother for a week. I should have liked much to have gone down into Suffolk to see all my friends there: but I must put that off for the present. I want to have an evening's chat with you in your snuggery—I want to see Mr. Jenney, who, I understand, is not well. But all this must be put off for a while—I have bought no more pictures: indeed I have spent all my money: and I must wait till next quarter before I make a fresh plunge. But I have not seen anything very tempting lately: I flatter myself I have exhausted the pawnbrokers of the probability of anything

good in their shops for at least a quarter of a year. Near here is a sweet little sea piece by Morland, £20—and a very clever landscape by some Fleming, £10. But I can live very well without either, now I have got my Titian to feed on. It is cut and come again with him, so far as colour is concerned.

And now for that hatefullest of all places, Brighton: whither if you wish to direct me a letter (do) direct it 129 King's Road. I have not seen the Pocket Book you speak of: but I remember now having heard Mills murmur something about having sent a pen and ink sketch I made of his house to be engraved. We'll have Boulge cottage in the next. Alfred Tennyson, my neighbour, is getting better: and I advise him to go down to his friends for Xmas:—To this he seems half inclined: so whether I shall find him here on my return is very doubtful. I shall miss him very much though we squabble and growl like dogs at each other.

I wish you and yours'

A Merrie Xmas

& am yrs as ever

E.F.G.

LONDON. *January/42.*

Once more, my dear Barton, I sit down to write another chapter in the History of our Dilettantism. It is such pleasant trifling that I hope we shall not bid it quite Adieu with this year. I have been to two Auctions since I wrote to you: at the first of which I bought a huge naked woman—a copy of Raffaelle—as large as life down to the knees—which you will allow is quite enough of her. I bought her at dusk—one of the last lots—when all other bidders had buttoned up their money in their breeches pockets, and made up their minds that nothing more was to be done. The auctioneer himself was tired, and glad to have done: so she was knocked down to me for £3.10. I could scarcely see her: and when I went with Laurence to look at her this morning, expected to find a daub: but it is a very good copy:—only such exhibitions are not fit for Quakers' eyes—I have sent her to Laurence's house to preserve my reputation. He is a married man. At this sale the pictures went cheap. I went to a sale this morning where all went as dear: and the whole concern was a hoax. I saw that fat fellow Rowe of Ipswich at both these auctions. At the last he bought a

pretty little landscape at my recommendation. But he gave the full value for it—

Well now about the Poacher. He is bought. He is home. He is d—d ugly. Droll enough, the same man who was about to buy my Constable (No. 2) was also about to buy the Poacher, just when I made up my mind to take them. This was no stratagem of the dealer to sharpen my desire to buy; for he told me of it both times after I had bought. How shall the Poacher go to you?—Must he have a box made?—I can make no doubt that if you want £3 for him, you will easily get it in Suffolk, when you grow tired of him: indeed he is worth £5 to those who like the subject—Your idea of Peter Bell is a very apposite one indeed.

We have had trouble at home. Captain Allen, Lusia's betrothed lover, is dead with nearly all his crew on the shore of the fatal Niger. He wrote to her in good health and spirits the day before he was taken ill: and lay ill more than 30 days—He was a gallant fellow, true to the cause to the last: for when they proposed to turn back to the River's mouth and take him out of the evil air, he bid them hold on—You may imagine it was a sad thing to break this to

poor Lusia, who was sanguine of his return: I shall not easily forget doing it. I knew of what had happened all day, and she was not to be told till night. It is an awful thing to be as it were in the secret of Fate, and see another smiling unconscious of the bolt that you know must fall. She was much benumbed: and finally taking off a golden bracelet which her lover had sent her from Africa, and which she had worn night and day, from the moment she had received it, crushed it into my Father's hand and fell upon his bosom, in a way that no affectation of passion could reach, however novel-like it may seem to read. She has shewn great fortitude and determination to bear up since.

You may wonder how with all this going on I have the heart to run about picture dealing. I cannot however help it: though I wish I had a stronger sense of these afflictions. What I can do for my poor dear Lusia I hope to do now and as long as I live. She is a noble-hearted girl: and should be married to a good fellow. Here is a monstrous letter. And so goodbye.

Oh, Barton how inferior are all the black Wouvermans, Holbeins, Rusdaels &c. to a fresh Constable, with the dew on it. Pictures have

their ages as men—The darkening shadow of time does not so much injure the effect of figures, especially in religious or dramatic subjects: but all the freshness of colours is required to give the freshness of landscape—

E.F.G.

P.S. Don't bargain about the picture till you see it: I do not say it is anything very fine: but a good bit of Northcote for £2—That is all.

P.S. I really like your picture very much, on looking more at it. *Keep* it—It is a kind of *pendant* to Reynold's Banished Lord—*banished* meaning perhaps *transported*.

*Sat: Febr* 19/42

DEAR BARTON,

That this wonderful correspondence may not languish till it dies a natural sudden death, I send you such a Report on the Fine Arts as has been laid on your table every Sunday morning, I think, for several weeks. Your temptations have ended in a fall: you have bought the box:[1] well—I have had smaller temptations which I have resisted. In particular, a little bit of

[1] Barton collected snuff-boxes: he had no fewer than thirty at the time of his death, many of them valuable works of art.

evening landscape by some body: very like what I remember of a village near Cambridge: a small bit of canvas, but well suggestive of the Spirit of the time: that is, of Twilight. £4.10 they want: but the picture has been rubbed in parts, especially in the sky: so that it is not in keeping. I don't know however if I can yet pronounce myself safe: I walk insensibly *that* way: flutter round the shop-window—there it is: meeting my gaze with a kind of ironical quiet—I have also seen a picture of Highland Shooting by Ward: and fortunately recollecting that my Uncle goes every year to shoot in Perthshire, I think I cant do better than lay out £7 for him—What I gain by buying pictures for my friends is the keeping those pictures for a time in my room, and then seeing them from time to time afterward. Besides, the pride of making a good purchase and shewing one's taste: all that contributes to health and long life. I hope you like the Gainsborough still: I shall be really glad to see that little picture again. I knew it would want varnishing soon: indeed it was varnished (by the dealer's mistake) too soon after I had cleaned it with oil —There are three genuine pictures of Gainsborough now to be seen in Conduit St. I under-

stand: the property of some Suffolk man. Laurence saw them: says they are copies of Wynant's manner: do you know whose they are? I dare say Mr. C. does. Poor old Nursey[1]—I think I remember his sketch of Bealings Bridge in the good old picturesque days: when little rivers were suffered to run wild.

I have cut down my great Opie, and think I have done well: I am going to paint it on Monday, as it has suffered during the late operation: it will then be cleaned, and left at a dealer's shop to earn what it can. Never was a stupider purchase. I am glad you have got rid of your sham Constable. Only wait till I come down and shew you a real one. You have some picture of a Holy Family, or some sacred subject—people in red and yellow—by Rubens or P. Veronese—which you must get rid of one day. It has no merit if I recollect rightly—

My dear Barton, I hope you keep all this nonsense of mine to yourself. You have a bad habit of reading letters out, have you not?—Pray, pray dont these. I have lost some of my confidence in you since I hear that you read those lines of mine to my Mother! My dear

[1] Perry Nursey—a Suffolk artist.

fellow! You have no idea of what FitzGeralds are. If you betray me further, you shall learn what they are by my abusing you like a pick pocket. So look out. Does not your little Nellie laugh at two elderly gentlemen (for am not I 33—which is certainly elderly in a damsel's eyes) corresponding in this way?—She hasn't those eyes for nothing—rather mischievous eyes, if I remember. Now goodbye again.

[unsigned]

(London)
(*March 2.* 1842)

And now, Barton, know that I really have made my last purchase in the picture line for the season—today at Phillips' I fell—my virtue fell under the Auctioneer's hammer—an early Venetian picture the seducer—a Holy Family—to think such Families should be painted to allure unwary youths into Sin!—There they sit collected in a quiet group just outside the walls of Nazareth, or Bethlehem—sweet St. Catherine with the palm in her hand, her yellow hair encircled with a row of pearls. The child is an ugly swollen child:—but I skip him—This picture pleases me hugely—But my encouragement to

buy afresh has been this: that Mr. Browne[1] the elder (long life to him!) came to town yesterday: eat a meat tea at my rooms: and was pleased to express himself laudatorily of my Opie Fruit Girl:—I said nothing then: but I hope to make him buy her for what I gave—£4. She has cost me some shillings more in getting her curtailed: and then have I not painted her myself?—Besides this I understand a man at Bedford has offered to buy a picture I have there: good fellow: so he shall: and then I shant have to borrow monies this quarter, shall I?—And as for the future, I utterly scorn it—I bought the best picture in to-day's auction: and this over the dealers' heads: who had agreed the picture had been painted on:—"Look there—there's a patch" &c.—whereas the picture has been *rubbed*, not re-painted, and probably was but a sketch at first. I exult over the whole tribe.

Alfred Tennyson suddenly appeared in town to-day: I carried him off to the auction: and then with violence to Moxon: who is to call on him to-morrow, and settle the publishing of a new volume. And only think: 2 new volumes are

[1] Alderman Browne, of Bedford, *vide* letter in the present series dated November, 1839.

just coming out: one by Daddy Wordsworth[1]: another by Campbell—the Daddy's Tragedy!—what a lamentable one it will be—and Campbell's book is to get money—Then Trench is coming out!—such wonders is this Spring to call forth. Milnes talks of a popular edition of his poems!—poor devil, as if he could make one by any act of typography.

Goodbye. Given under our hand in the exultation of a new purchase this 2nd or 1st day of March in the year 1842

E. FitzGerald

London, *Saturday*
(*March* 12. 1842)

Dear Barton,

Being in a sort of bilious medicated state today, I have no great mind to write a letter:—but here goes for a short one. My Papa is gone down to Ipswich by the Steamer today: and I suppose he will be at Boulge the beginning of next week. He then goes off to Geldestone. I expect to go down either the end of next week (I mean the week that begins to-morrow) or the very beginning of the week after: and am now casting about to stow my pictures away—books

[1] *The Borderers.*

&c. I have bought no new pictures: and have escaped the Battle piece hitherto. I take care not to go near the field of action. Yesterday I saw a very graceful Sir Joshua Portrait—an early, and rather thin-bodied, one—sold for £4.

My last Venetian purchase is my favourite: I dont know if you would admire it: and I dont know if I can give you an opportunity of doing so: for it is painted on a heavy panel. But the Constable shall go down among the East Angles.

And now I must finish my letter—I am going to get a mouthful of fresh air at Lewisham today: and indeed that is all the medicine I want.

Ever yrs E.F.G.

(London)
(*March* 17. 1842)

Dear Barton,

I went for two days to see my friend Spring Rice at Lewisham; the fresh air made me a new man, but my return to London has knocked me up again. When I can stow away all these pictures and books I shall be off to good old Suffolk. I have sold a pony which I had in Bedfordshire, and which I have relied on as something to fall back upon—If I happen to go down Holborn, I shall scarce be able to resist the

Battle Piece now—However, as one sees more pictures, one becomes more fastidious: and I hope to be less tempted another year. I could part with 3 or 4 that I have without caring: my Constable, my Venetian Holy Family, and my *Twilight*, are all I greatly wish to keep. I saw a portrait by Sir Joshua sold for £46 the other day—very good—but not worth that.

Your verses to Mrs. H are very kindly: and you will much improve them by a little condensation of expression[1]—Poor Tennyson has got home some of his proof sheets: and, now that his verses are in hard print, thinks them detestable—There is much I had always told him of—his great fault of being too full and complicated—which he now sees, or fancies he sees, and wishes he had never been persuaded to print. But with all his faults, he will publish such a volume[2] as has not been published since the time of Keats: and which, once published, will never be suffered to die. This is my prophecy: for I live before Posterity.

I dont know that you will care for most of his poems, which are in the heroic way: but there are

[1] Mrs. Hemans: Barton took the hint.
[2] *Poems* (1842).

some on quieter themes which you cannot fail to like. *Lady Exeter* is among them: and an English Eclogue called *Dora*, which comes near the book of Ruth—To add to the list of Poets who are to be seen altogether above the horizon this Spring, is Henry Artewelde Taylor—He has got a Saxon story:[1] which will be a d—d bore, I should think.

I have been given 5 bottles of wine: and tomorrow night 4 artists are coming to drink them quite up—And now goodbye—If you want any masterpieces before I leave London, you must write soon.

Ever yrs E.F.G.

LONDON

*March 26/42*

MY DEAR BARTON,

I really expect to be down in Suffolk by the middle of next week: but it is not certain. Some of my enormous pictures I have sent off to my friend Laurence who gives them harbour: the rest are to follow. I meant to have sent down my *Twilight* this day by Warren in the steamer: but could of course get no packing case made for it yesterday—I see tempting sales advertised in

[1] *Edwin the Fair.*

the papers: but I think my work is done for this year: and perhaps next year one will be wise enough not to want to have pictures at all. The Battle piece is still to be got, I dare say—but shall it be said that I who have resisted so long shall fall at last?[1]—I am going this morning with Tennyson to Dulwich: when we get there of course the Gallery will be shut because of Easter. Well, then we shall go in a bad humour to dine at a tavern: get heartily sick of each other: and so back to town—His printing gets on very slowly: but the world will have its reward for waiting—Can I be mistaken in supposing some of these poems so good as to endure?—I doubt if I have the merit of being so partial a friend as to be blinded so far. To be sure, a bad judgment may make up for deficiency of cordiality—

So now goodbye. I must change my shirt, and put myself in order. A fine blowing day—Trench's book is out: seemingly a very tiresome affair—If I could have written it I should have had too much wit to publish it.

E.F.G.

[1] He withstood the allurement of the Battle Piece this winter, but finding it still unsold the following winter, he fell.

(*Oct.* 2. 1842)

DEAR BARTON,

I enclose you an agreeable note from Spedding, which I have just received. It may amuse you—The sale of pictures is just over;—I have bought 4—one more than I thought for—And now how to send them off to their owners is the difficulty. I have bought 1. Lely—2. Sigismunda—3. Cenci—& 4 that bad copy of Raffaelle. Mrs. Corrance bought two vast affairs: the Fytt, and the Caravaggio. I advised her to buy the last; and I should think Frederic will whip her for it—Churchyard bought you Mrs. Claypole for £5.

Yrs E.F.G.

Churchyard does not write because I have told you the news.

This is Spedding's note which FitzGerald enclosed for Barton's amusement:—

MIREHOUSE—23 *Sept.* (1842)

MY DEAR FITZ

I am glad that you have found my rooms habitable. I hope the paper is more successful than the last, which I have always thought the

ugliest I ever saw. But my way is to leave the choice entirely to other people, and then whatever be the result, it is nothing to me. When I choose a thing myself, and it proves a failure, (which it generally does) I am unhappy as long as I look at it.

I daresay that in the intervals of your legal pursuits, you will see Laurence; (who, by the way, has not yet written to me to announce the production of the complete thing, though I understand that he has advanced as far [as] the Dutch perfection already, and is only waiting till he has turned out a Venetian specimen) and you will probably be passing some day within a few yards of Rodd, the bookseller. I observe by the paper that a portrait of Bacon (painter anonymous) was bought by Rodd at Stowe. I have some reason to believe that it is only another version of the portrait by Vansomer, and none to expect that it has any value for me. Nevertheless I should like to know something about it.

I have been occupied for the last week in trying whether I could sail the boat with a kite. It was necessary first to make one; and I had forgotten how. When I had made him to look like

such kites as I have seen fly, it was necessary to teach him that art, about which I must say he was extremely awkward. And when I had partly brought him into order, we had three calm days. However this morning I succeeded in making him fly beautifully. He was more like an eagle than a kite, you would have thought it was only the string that prevented him from flying up to the 12 o'clock sun: but you would have been mistaken: for when the string broke, and he might go where he would, his aspiration suddenly collapsed and he fell absurdly through flickering gyres upon the upper branch of an oak. Having recovered him (not undamaged) from his perilous position, I took him to the boat and got him up again, and succeeded in steering quite across the lake without oars,—I then wore; and was on my way to the other shore with a side wind; when he unfortunately dislocated his left wing in a gust, and after flying lame for some time at last came down head foremost into the lake like a seagull at a fish. I brought him home like the prodigal, "lean, rent, and beggared with the strumpet wind." I think of making a bigger.

While you are making arrangements with your reversionaries, are you in need of any present

supply? My banker is in easy circumstances, and I can lend you all that you are likely to want without any inconvenience.

Ever yrs
Jas Spedding.

James Spedding was one of FitzGerald's dearest friends. Born within a year of each other, they first met at school—the Grammar School at Bury St. Edmunds in Suffolk—and afterwards they were fellow collegians at Trinity College, Cambridge. Spedding was a remarkable man. His great natural ability, calm and thoughtful temperament, and unusual power of perseverance are qualities that fitted him to take a high place in the public service, a service to which for a short time he belonged. But being well provided with private means, and having no sort of ambition, he threw up his appointment and devoted the greater part of the remaining forty years of his life to editing the works and letters of Francis Bacon, whose character and acts he defended with dogged resolution in fourteen volumes—"the hugest and faithfullest bit of literary navvy work I have ever met with in this generation," as Carlyle said of them.

Among other friends of Spedding's, besides FitzGerald and Carlyle, were Tennyson, Thackeray, and Arthur Hallam, by all of whom he was looked upon as a wise counsellor and delightful companion. In 1845 FitzGerald wrote of him to Frederic Tennyson:

"Spedding, you know, does not change: he is now the same that he was fourteen years old when I first knew him at school more than twenty years ago; wise, calm, bald, contriving the best qualities of Youth & Age."

And in 1881, soon after Spedding's death, he thus described his character to Professor Norton of Harvard University:

"He was the wisest man I have known: not the less so for plenty of the Boy in him; a great sense of Humour, a Socrates in Life and Death, which he faced with all Serenity so long as Consciousness lasted."

Spedding's capacity for boyishness, on which FitzGerald lays stress, must have been an attractive trait in his character, and it is well and clearly shown in his letter to FitzGerald describing his week-long occupation and efforts

to sail his boat by means of a kite, and yet more so by his concluding remark:—"I think of making a bigger."

Laurence, to whom Spedding refers in his letter, was the well-known and accomplished academician who painted, or drew in crayons, portraits of all FitzGerald's intimate friends. He executed what is evidently a successful one of Spedding which he gave to FitzGerald. From a whimsical description of this portrait contained in one of FitzGerald's letters, we can form an idea of one feature of Spedding's appearance—his high forehead.

"Does the thought ever strike you," he wrote, "when looking at pictures in a house, that you are to run and jump at one, and go right through it into some behind-scene world on the other side, as Harlequins do? A steady portrait especially invites one to do so: the quietude of it ironically tempts one to outrage it: one feels it would close over the panel, like water, as if nothing had happened. That portrait of Spedding, for instance, which Laurence has given me: not swords, nor cannon, nor all the Bulls of Bashan butting at it, could, I feel sure, dis-

compose that venerable forehead. No wonder that no hair can grow at such an altitude: no wonder this view of Bacon's virtue is so rarefied that the common consciences of men cannot endure it."

(*January* 29, 1843)

Dear Sir,

Tomorrow the most amiable of his sex will put himself on the top of the Blue Coach, and he trusts, reach Woodbridge rather late at night: too late to look for you—But next week! Lay in a Double Gloucester—I start by the Shannon[1] at 9 A.M. to be dropped at the gates of New Hall Convent, where I am to see my heretical cousins for an hour: then be taken up by the Blue:[1] and so homeward. Say, shall this rich Argosy ever reach its port! What patient thought has been expended on providing for the voyage—Shall it be well accomplished?—Put on your laurel, and pray to Apollo by the remembrance of his own Phaeton that wheels and horses may run lightly and well. If it rains hard, I shall hold on my course by the Shannon and come in early: but New Hall if possible.

I have much and momentous to tell you of. Indeed I wrote to you the other day. Did you

[1] The name of a public coach.

get the letter! Perhaps not, as I think I did not post it. But the Naseby Epic is in store for you. Such deeds "as made the Tenants weep"—

I have bought a pretty picture of an ugly boy for £1. All the purchase I have made—Farewell. Put on your laurel directly, and tell Vertue to blow his nose.

E.F.G., or say
classically
Philocaseotostus: which is
a Love of Toasted Cheese.

In the preceding September FitzGerald had made the acquaintance of Carlyle, who was then laboriously getting together material for his book on Cromwell—"sticking fast in bottomless clammy mud, and Sloughs of Despond," as he expressed it in the following letter (hitherto unpublished). The meeting between the two men was opportune, for FitzGerald was able with his intimate knowledge of the country round about Naseby to set Carlyle right on matters respecting the topography of the Naseby battlefield. Some of the published letters to Barton at this period describe how FitzGerald

had superintended excavations in order to verify by human remains certain phases of the battle—"bone-rummaging," he calls it. It was probably all this that he had in mind when he informed Barton that he had much and momentous to tell him of.

CHELSEA, *Sunday*

DEAR FITZGERALD,

With real reluctance I have written that Note to the Lincoln Doctor; which, I think, you will perhaps be as wise to burn as to forward:—beforehand I know almost for certain that there will nothing come of it but bad corresponding and botheration. Nobody does "know" anything,—especially as to that unfortunate subject! However, that you may not call me cross and wilful, there is for you; do as you like.

What is become of your influenza; and when are you coming to Town?—My work is still sticking fast in bottomless clammy mud, and Sloughs of Despond!—

I dare not borrow anybody's horse, tho' I study always to ride conscientiously, and our Livery-Stable people seemed very careful: I dare not borrow;—and *who*, as you say, dare

buy? My health seems sometimes to grow better, and then suddenly again it grows worse than ever: I am in the medium state at present.

The Town is getting terribly throng; the sky more and more vernal;—one wishes one had wings! Fly you the *other* way tho'!

Yours ever truly

T. CARLYLE.

(LONDON)
(*June* 1843)

MY DEAR BARTON,

The day before yesterday I reached London after a very pleasant stay in Cambridgeshire with Mrs. Frere. We went to Ely on a visit to the Dean, Dr. Peacock: there we were entertained with High Church honours of all sorts from Chaunted Litanies to still Champagne —It was very pleasant: fine weather:—a verger in canonicals waiting at dinner: choristers to sing glees for us at night. Then there was Cromwell's house to be visited—2 miles from Ely: I made a drawing of it for Carlyle—You see his new book[1] is out: I am now reading it: you will also read it I suppose: or if not, read what he

[1] *Past and Present.*

has written before and that is the same thing—Here I find all my pictures spread out before me as when I left: huge purchases! I begin to be rather frightened with their size, now that the time of disposing of them draws near. I hope to be in town but 3 weeks or so, and then to go to Ireland. Not that I want so much to go to Ireland as to get away from this hot hole. Thackeray's book[1] will soon be out: the last proof sheets were just now brought him at the tail of our breakfast. Then he will spread his wings for Paris—Why won't you come up and see me?—The bugs are just beginning to bite: Thackeray says he was bit last night, and I hear old John taking down the curtains from his bed in the floor above this. Tell me of your Norwich trip: you had bad weather, I doubt. Compts to Miss Barton.

Ever yrs E.F.G.

Naseby, Welford
*Septr.* (12. 1843)

Dear Barton,

I have been suffering for these last 4 days with an attack, which I partly attribute to my

[1] *Irish Sketch Book.*

having walked to Thornby under a burning sun, then eaten unripe peaches, and then gone to sleep upon long wet grass! A pretty mixture—I have paid for it: and am even now in a state of water gruel, shiverings, headache like a thundercloud over the eyes &c. The Doctor told me my tongue was very white: I told him the tongues of all Suffolk men were said to be white. He looked rather as if he was affronted. Haven't you heard this before, as a saying?—We have had a famous harvest at Naseby. Today a little rain begins to fall: but we are nearly all safely housed. I talk of going the end of this week to Bedford at the Post Office of which place a letter will find me. I do not mean to wait for Carlyle—He did not return from Scotland by Liverpool, but by Edinburgh packet &c. and I doubt if he will be much inclined to set off here again soon. Still he writes that he is very earnest so to do: since he has been to see the field of Dunbar, and verified all its position. He stood on the spot where Cromwell stood when the sun broke out, and Oliver broke out too with "Arise O Lord" &c and led such a charge as won the battle. "Worthy man!" Carlyle calls him.

When I got home I found my brother married

and come down here. These little surprises are common in our family. She seems a decent woman. We have other rumours of marriage afloat too: but what the issue will be nobody knows. The wind bloweth where it listeth.

You should have stated the reason why Mr. Churchyard left off smoking, for the benefit of survivors. Why did he? Let him leave off cigars: that is good: but pipes!—Not that I can boast, for I believe some of my headache originates from them—

I am glad our dear Major[1] has taken up the Privy Council—as a wit once called it. Do you also read the book and see if it is not more interesting than *Gaities and Gravities*.[2] "The health of the whole world!" Is not this a poetical subject?—Poetry has done its duty by daisies, heart-breakings &c.—it must now turn to the real views of mankind at large—or be lost. The ideal and the actual are about to meet!—Therefore be wise in time and send me a sonnet to a Privy in return for mine. The diver may be a night man, and he may bring up a fragrant

[1] Major Moor of Great Bealings near Woodbridge.
[2] *Gaities and Gravities*, by Horace Smith.

treasure which may tell him how it became so fragrant. Farewell.

E.F.G.

A diver springing darkly to the brim
Of the full sapphire river as it rolled
Under palm shadows over sands of gold
Along the balmy vale of Almahim:
Brought up what seem'd a piece of common mould,
But of so rare a fragrance that he cried—
"Mine eyes are dim with diving—thou'rt no piece
Of common earth, but musk or ambergrease"—
"I am but common earth" the clod replied—
"But once within my dusky bosom grew
The Rose, and so insinuated through
Her aromatic fibres day by day,
That time her virtue never will subdue,
Nor all the rambling water wash away——"

This I found in my desk tonight—I remember versifying it out of a passage in one of old D'Israeli's books—when, I forget—But it turned up opportunely as a counter stench to the subject of the last part of my letter. The last line is a good one—But my poetical farthing candle is almost burnt out. Is your *Liar* silent?

Here maybe we have the earliest positive indication of FitzGerald's affection for the old Persian poets. The book he refers to is

evidently Isaac D'Israeli's *Mejnoun and Leila*, and the passage therein which caught his fancy and suggested the sonnet runs as follows:

"I was once in the bath, and they gave me a piece of scented clay. It was more than fragrant. And I asked of it,—Art thou pure musk, or ambergris? for thy scent delights my soul? It answered,—I was but Common Earth till I lived in the company of my Rose; then every day I became sweeter, till all her aromatic spirit was infused into mine. Oh! had I not lived with my Rose, I should still have been but a lump of Earth!"

It is more than likely that this Persian allegory was familiar to FitzGerald in another way, for it forms one of the contributions in Lucy Barton's Album,[1] a book containing autograph contri-

[1] The Album dates from 1824, the year when Charles Lamb contributed thereto his well-known lines beginning "Little book surnamed of White," under the heading "For the first leaf in Hannah's Album." A close inspection of the originial script shows that Lamb first wrote "For the first leaf in Lucy's Album." He then carefully erased the word "Lucy" with a penknife and substituted "Hannah" for it. In the letter which followed—written on the same sheet of paper he said, "I assume that her name is Hannah because it is a pretty Scriptural cognomen." This is a nice example of Lamb's inveterate habit of playfulness, and of the delight he took in giving rein to his fancy.

butions from his beloved Sir Walter Scott and others, which he must assuredly often have handled and enjoyed.

The contributor was Major Moor—the "dear Major" of the foregoing letter. Moor transcribed the whole passage from Sadi in the Persian characters and adds his own translation of it.

"A piece of scented earth used as soap was one day given to me in the bath. Charmed with its fragrance I said, 'Art thou musk or ambergris? —Whence thy delightful odour?' It answered 'I was a despicable piece of clay—but carried into a garden I associated with the Rose.'"

In his monograph, *Edward FitzGerald*, Mr. A. C. Benson suggests that it may have been from Major Moor that FitzGerald derived his first relish for Persian literature.

"The Major," he wrote, " . . . was always ready to walk with the boy and would talk for the hour together about . . . his Eastern experiences. To this influence we can confidently trace . . . his interest in Oriental literature. Indeed Major Moor can, perhaps, be dignified with the title of the true begetter of the Omar Khayyam."

It seems clear therefore that for many years previous to 1853 (the year when, as Mr. Wright informs us, FitzGerald began seriously to devote himself to the study of Persian), the intention to learn the language had lain dormant within him. There is very little reference to Persian poetry in his letters until 1856—the year of his marriage to Lucy Barton. By that time he was sufficiently proficient in the subject to read the language in the original script without the help of his mentor, Professor Cowell. As things turned out, his sufficient acquirement of Persian at this period stood him in good stead—not only for the reason that with Cowell's departure for India in 1856 he could no longer rely upon his guidance, but also because he thus had a congenial subject ready at hand to which he could turn when the mortification of the knowledge that he had made a blunder by marrying came home to him. Out of evil sometimes cometh good. Men not infrequently do their best work under the stress of adversity. Had it not been for the overwhelming need he felt to divert his thoughts from the mistake he had made, we may justly doubt whether he would ever so far have overcome his naturally indolent temperament as to

produce the best that was in him. Moreover, the philosophy of Omar attuned perfectly with his then despondent frame of mind. To these several circumstances we may attribute his translation of the *Rubaiyat.*

18 Charlotte St.
Rathbone Place.
[?*Autumn* 1843]

Dear Barton,

I returned from Brighton to this City on Tuesday. And here I shall be, I suppose, till Tuesday next. After that, I know not what should keep me from getting into Suffolk again: unless it be that confounded London Library, which will not open when one wants it.

I have scarce seen a picture since I have been here—much less bought one. I walk down Wardour St and bid its "temptations pass me heedless by"—Tell Churchyard that my Wilson sketch is going into a frame too big for it. But then every one will think it a precious thing when it is almost lost in its setting—Tell him also I have but just recovered [from] his toasted Cheese—Wretch that I was—to eat as if I had the stomach of an Ostrich—

London whirls and bothers me as usual—But there will soon be an end of all that. I am just going off to Kensington to see poor Isabella, who is in all sorts of troubles. I have seen some of my friends: but have not been to visit the God of Chelsea yet. His book comes out this very day, I believe.

This is a very poor note, but I have no wits—Let me hear how you are, and if the Deben[1] holds its current still. I will beg Spring Rice not to make a Creek of it.[2] Farewell.

EF.

GELDESTONE,
*Oct.* 21./43

MY DEAR BARTON,

I have just returned from Norwich, where I assisted (a French phrase) at a Ball and a Concert. Also bought a picture of course—a fine head, either by Georgione, or a Flemish copyist—But as I am not particular, I call it Georgione: and shall sell it to old Rogers at a vast profit—

Rossi, the dealer of whom I bought it, told me that Mr. Churchyard had been at Norwich lately, and bought two Cromes of him. I sup-

[1] The small tidal river beside which Woodbridge stands.

[2] Stephen Spring Rice was Deputy Chairman of the Board of Customs.

pose you have been tempted with these before now. Rossi showed me another: which I did not consider a good specimen. The Lake scene[1] you have is (taking it all in all) the best Crome I ever saw—it is the most poetical. That cold fishy mere!—

I hear tis as hard to find a lodging at Ipswich as at Woodbridge. Where is a single gentleman to rest the sole of his foot! Norwich looked not unamiable this time—Anywhere so it be somewhere!—

Farewell. It will not be long before I move toward you. Isabella was married on Wednesday: and sailed to the Continent next day.

Ever yrs

EFG.

13 Coram St.[2]
*Tuesday*
(? *November* 1843)

My dear Barton,

If Mr. Churchyard says that the sketch is either Reynolds or Gainsborough, I beg you to

[1] Mr. E. V. Lucas, in his book *Bernard Barton and his Friends*, thus describes the picture: "An old Crome, a masterpiece of this great painter, depicting a rain-cloud bursting over a peaceful mere at evening.

[2] FitzGerald was staying with Thackeray, who lived then at 13 Coram Street.

buy it for me for £5 directly—As to Wodderspoon's own opinion of its genuineness, I can have no reliance on it as I dont know his genuineness—Is the sketch of the size of life?—Pray let me hear this—I have yet bought no pictures which makes me more bold about the sketch. You have the money, and can pay for it at once—You see that I attributed your delay in writing to illness: desk work is better than that anyhow—

I got a slap on the back from Carlyle yesterday as I was walking up Regent St with a cigar in my mouth, (N.B.—a very misty day)—"there you are going along quite at your ease"—He was dressed in a coat called a Zephr. Farewell.

EFG.

[Boulge]
[? *January* 1884]

Dear Barton,

Going jauntily into a house the other day with the last £20 I had of you in my pocket, I called for a bill which I supposed would come to about £7—leaving me a handsome remainder to pay other accounts due. I therefore cast my eye carelessly on the account produced, and lo! the amount was £19—I did not change countenance, or faint: but with true greatness of mind

called for my £1 change, buttoned it up with a smile, and with a cheerful "Good Day" left the house. But the mind—the inward mind—could not in total peace endure. However, I say no more. Silence is great. So is a £20 note—But no more—no more of that.

In the meanwhile another £20 has become mine at Coutts's—will you kindly get it for me; and keep it ready for me; for have I not Gale, Ipitt, Burton of Ipswich, Clarke of Bredfield, and Mallett of Woodbridge—to pay for their damned repairs here? I have—And I have got a very bad cold—and a new Grate—a Register—is put up in my room—a capital thing. When Peel said "Register—Register—Register!" —I now see what he meant.

Carlyle has had a handsome invitation from his Grace of Manchester to go and inspect MSS at Kimbolton.

I shall come to Woodbridge when I can.

Ever yours

EFG.

I sent three vol's of Pepys for your Lady. Send me back your Xr North's *Recreations*, please—Shall you be at home tomorrow?

[Boulge]
[? *March* 1844]

Dear Barton,

Pray thank Miss Barton for taking the trouble to write to me. I shall be with you to-morrow, though perhaps not till the evening—or late in the afternoon.

I am going to send back a heap of your books I have had this long while.

Yours ever
EFG.

By the bye, about the *kit*. I forgot to mention it is a *Tom:* which some people don't like: I don't; I cannot conceive a Cat other than feminile (*sic*)—Miss Barton is not to take the kit therefore, unless she like it on due reflection—The kit is a handsome one, and now quite qualified to go alone—to lap—and playful enough. It does credit to Mrs. Faier's[1] education.

London. *Wednesday. April*
(1844)

My dear Barton,

This is to say that the *Magi*, an Italian nobleman's head, a *Holy Family*, and some heathen Gods, went down in a very large

[1] FitzGerald's housekeeper at Boulge cottage.

packing box yesterday by Smith's waggon to Woodbridge, where I conclude they will arrive tomorrow—Thursday. Will you on Thursday afternoon step down to the Royal Oak (I think it is) and see if such a box has arrived: and if our Farmer Smith have not sent for it, be so good as to order that it be *kept under cover* till he does. Do not *you* open it: much as your fingers tingle to do so: the whole affair had best roll up altogether like a cloud to Boulge, till I come down with screw driver, hammer, and all authority, to explode the thing. Alas! there is so little to be seen! do not quickly shame the poor little Yarrow you have dreamt of these three years—I hope soon to get down to Boulge: and then we will have a grand field day and house warming at the Cottage, and see the pictures, and know for the thousand and first time that all is Vanity—

Thank Miss Barton for taking charge of the kit. It shall grow a Cat, and flourish. I am now looking over and partly transcribing a heap of old letters from Italy: these are to furbish up into an article for Fraser's Magazine and bring the writer £10. How do you like the quality of this letter paper?[1]—It necessarily makes

[1] The paper is gilt-edged and of a fine, translucent quality.

the author who writes upon it one-sided—I buy no pictures: I go to no plays: why, Fitz, thou hast played thy fill, and eat and drank: tis time to be going. What sort of *feller* is Mr. *Meller?* does he befit ye better than Witty?—

Our dear Major[1]—I hear at Portland Place he is coming to town the end of this week. And Dr. Lynn has had paralysis—and we all live in a ridiculous parenthesis of Time on a shelf made by insects and planted by stray sea mews[2]—Farewell—

ever yrs

EFG.

FitzGerald's emotional temperament was much excited at this period, and the effect is very marked in his letters. While the impulse is at its height he slips off the reserve which generally cloaks his innermost thoughts, and shows the conflict surging in his mind between reasoned doubt and blind faith. It is not unlikely that the sceptical side of his mind had been strengthened by reading Lyell's "*Elements*

[1] Major Moor had recently suffered a paralytic stroke.

[2] Cf. with FitzGerald's reflections on the infinitudes of space and time in his letter to Cowell on p. 228 of the published letters (1907) edition. Cf. also Quatrain XLVII of his translation of the *Rubaiyat.*

*of Geology*," but whatever the direction or extent of his misgivings they were evidently overbalanced for the time being by the preaching of Matthews—the Revivalist—whose services, during the Lenten season then just passed, FitzGerald had been attending in Bedford. Thus in a letter of April 11th of this year to Barton he writes, with reference to the pictures—the *Magi* and others—that he was sending from London to Woodbridge:

"I am going to send down my pictures to Boulge, if I can secure them: they are not quite secure at present. If they vanish I snap my fingers at them, *Magi* and all—there is a world (alas!) elsewhere beyond pictures—Oh, Oh, Oh, Oh"——

And again in the same letter:—

"Oh this wonderful wonderful world, and we who stand in the middle of it are all in a maze, except poor Matthews of Bedford, who fixes his eyes upon a wooden Cross and has no misgiving whatsoever. When I was at his chapel on Good Friday, he called at the end of his grand sermon on some of the people to say merely

this, that they believed Christ had redeemed them: and first one got up and in sobs declared she believed it: and then another, and then another—I was quite overset:—all poor people: how much richer than all who fill the London Churches. Theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven!"

(London)
(*April* 1844)

My dear Barton,

While waiting for some books in the British Museum, I have the honour of informing you that, having enquired of the Saracen himself at Aldgate, he swears my pictures *did* go down last Tuesday, and would arrive at Woodbridge on *Wednesday*. It is possible therefore that Smith having a waggon at market may have taken back my pictures by way of ballast when the corn was disposed of. I hope so. But if the box exploded by the way—if the *Holy Families* were laid in the dirt—if the *Magi*, forbearing to stop at Woodbridge as they ought, chose to go on foolishly to Halesworth—why—I say again, I snap my fingers at them. I will buy no more things that cause me to go to Aldgate such a morning as this.

I have not seen Churchyard: had I known his

put-up I would have called on him. I saw his Linnell's sketch for sale at Christie's, as also a true Constable—*Salisbury Cathedral:* which he would have liked. Indeed I think he had seen it somewhere, and spoke to me of it.

We hear Major Moor is come back no better to London. I shall go down to Westminster to hear of him this evening. Are John's lectures over at Woodbridge?—

Ah—your trees are coming out, hedges and willows I know. But I shall soon be down to welcome them and introduce them with all goodwill to my garden at Boulge. My heart sucks at the fresh air from afar. I have seen nobody here, and all I want is to go away from the detestable dunghill. This is true, in spite of what the Squire says—I was obliged to come up to see Thackeray. I have scarce seen him.

My books come, and so I must make the best of the time and bid you farewell. You can write long letters: but are not you inspired with beakers full of the warm South wind that breathes of sweet briar and violets—The fishmongers' shops here are nearly as bad as the churchyards. Farewell.

ever yrs

E. F. G.

Charlotte St.
[*April* 27. 1844]

My dear Barton,

Thank [you] for the pains you have taken to ascertain the safe arrival of my goods. They *have* arrived safe, Smith writes me word: and are now in the Servants' hall at Boulge, only waiting the hand of the Enchanter to blossom into [a word or more omitted]. I assure you it is not my own desire that keeps me yet in London: next week I devoutly hope to be free of it. No one will believe that an idle man has anything to do or to think about—but it is not so easy to get a lamp-post down into the country.

Yet no pictures bought—no new pictures—"I fix an unreverted eye" away from them—Yet is there a Gainsborough to be sold at Xty's cool and peaceful as the Evening—

I went to see our dear Major yesterday. He was glad to see me, I think: but he is very unlike the man he was: whose like we never shall see again unless himself becomes himself again. But he will, surely. He sits idle, moping, eyes on the ground, dozing every now and then—and to smile is an act of courtesy with him. I am to dine with him at Phillipps' tomorrow. Tonight

I entertain Fradelle[1] and a fierce painter—Tea, brandy, a cold tongue &c. If Mr. Churchyard had returned with me, tell him he would have had this tongue to eat. But he would not. Yesterday at a tavern I drank a poor man's week's wages in a bottle of Champagne—It was scarcely my fault—but what beastly wickedness!—Till all this is set right, I shall look on Revolutions to be as just alteratives as Morison's Pills.

Ever yrs
E. F. G.

(London)
(*June, 1844*)

My dear Barton,

I have been hoaxing Crabbe with letters artfully contrived; but which he has defeated by the simple means of not reading what seemed not intended for his eyes. Deuce take him—Well; I really look to be back in Suffolk next week! Yea, really! I want to see my new roses, how they like their new quarters—My Father is now in Ireland with my poor Uncle, whose death may now be expected daily. Any-

[1] Henry Joseph Fradelle, historical painter.

how, by the end of this week I shall consider myself free of all engagements, and go my own ways.

When I wrote to you last, or what I wrote to you about, has wholly escaped my memory. Tell Churchyard I am sorry he is not coming to London. I could give him bed at the end of this week if he would even yet come—I have as yet bought no picture—Tell him that at the she-dragons where the early Gainsborough was last year, there is now (as I think) an early Wilson; of the same size—not *quite* the thing, but rising up towards the aerial effects of later years. £30. But I have not looked close to it. Some charming Sir Joshua's were sold last week at Christie's—What is the exact size of your Dell? I meant to have asked you this a month ago. Is it exactly the common portrait size? and what is that!—I have seen one or two frames lately that might suit your picture well—

All the world is gone to Epsom races today. I was offered a seat in a gay barouche: but such is not for me. I hate Epsom, roaring with Cockneys—

Well, now have you any last commands to me in this City—Going, going, going—soon will be,

Gone! Tomorrow to fresh fields, and pastures new! I gulp the country in anticipation—

Farewell—yrs ever

E.F.G.

Tavistock Hotel,
Covent Garden
(*Sept.* 17. 1844)

My dear Barton,

I know not if I shall be in town till you arrive in it. I came up yesterday from Winchester: and am going to see poor Isabella today: to do which is indeed my only motive to stay in this filthy ditch. I am located you see in a vegetable quarter: but not the sweeter for that. Give me a line (on venture) by return of post to say when you go—when you pass through London. I am going to send my friend John Allen[1] to see your brother for a day—next Tuesday—but I shall of course write to Leigh first to see if such a visit be acceptable.

Ever yrs

E.F.G.

[1] One of FitzGerald's earliest friends and correspondents. He became Archdeacon of Salop.

Barton's half-brother John[1] was a man of independent means—a Churchman—who lived on his estate at East Leigh, near Havant, in Hampshire. FitzGerald had some time before met him at Woodbridge, and paid a visit to East Leigh a few days previous to writing him the following letter:—

*To John Barton.*

Tavistock Hotel
Covent Garden
*Sept* 17/44

Dear Sir,

My friend John Allen, goes school inspecting in Hampshire next week: beginning with Havant next Tuesday—I am sure you would like him: and I am sure he would like you: and therefore I write to ask if you would choose to entertain him for an afternoon—namely, that of Tuesday. Now mind, I can only do this out of one motive: that I think it may do pleasure to you both; but if you do not anticipate this, or should have your house full, or any other just impediment: you will of course, say so. I will also admit, that Allen is very apt (as who would not) to be much wearied with his day's school

[1] "Your gentleman brother sets my mouth a-watering after liberty." C. Lamb to Bernard Barton. Feb. 10. 1825.

work, and not to show to much advantage in company afterwards. Indeed he is generally glad to get to his ease at an Inn—But as you found out the beauty of Spedding's portrait (which you saw at Woodbridge) so will you see (I am sure) the Humour, Wonder, and Observation, that lies in John Allen's eyes and eyebrows, though he should not say a word. Indeed those faculties are most of all compatible with Silence—

I came here yesterday: and will get out of the nasty place as soon as I can. Will you give me one line by return of post? Do, please. I think with great satisfaction of Leigh,[1] and its wise, polite, and agreeable household.

Carlyle did not find us out after all, though he came in a grand nobleman's carriage to see Winchester Cathedral. There's a pretty fellow to write democratic books for you.

Well, believe me yours very truly

E. FitzGerald

Geldestone
*Nov.* 20/44

Dear Barton,

I am here, as you say, in some glory—and I am going this very afternoon to Beccles with a

[1] John Barton's residence.

train of 5 children to buy *bull's eyes* (dost thou remember them?) and other sweetmeats. The children here are so simple by nature, and simply brought up, that a visit to Beccles is to them something what a visit to London is to others. My heart always sinks within me when I see them really interested in the piddling shops here, and think of the unutterable staleness of all such things to oneself.

I shall be back at Boulges next week, I believe. And then we will arrange about Xmas. I will bring Arnold with me: he was a noble fellow. Ginger came with me here and takes great delight in the rabbit burrows which belong to this sandy soil. We have no rabbits at Boulge: and the dog's talents go to waste. I am not permitted to have him in the room; so he lives in the stable, and will lose some manners in consequence, which Mrs. Faiers and I shall have to restore at our leisure.

I have had a long letter from Crabbe, all written with the freshness of 25—nay of one yet younger. I believe he would go with us to Beccles, and look into the shops with as much interest as the rest of us. He was 60 some days ago—

How will Miss Barton get on at Holbrook?[1] She *must* admire Wilkinson however; an unique specimen of a man who really does *all* he thinks he ought to do.

We have here a very pleasant new neighbour —a Mrs. Jones—niece of Lady Morgan, and wife of a clergyman who has the curacy of this village for a while; but whose Rectory is that of Bawdsey. She sings, plays, talks and is silent, all in harmonious order; and loves society. What will she do at Bawdsey! Even the shooting squires here have more ear than the howling German sea on one side, and the dreary desert *Walks* on the other. We must make much of this little Lady when she comes among us.

Yrs ever

E. FitzGerald

Brighton.
*Decr* 29/44

Dear Barton,

I sit here at home this very wet Sunday; and having looked over a volume of Blackwood, will now endite you a note all about nothing. I had yesterday a letter from Crabbe, to whom I

[1] The residence of the Rev. J. B. Wilkinson, FitzGerald's brother-in-law.

had written about some parish business. Tell him if you see him, or write to him, that he is too severe on our poor Beauty. He wishes "God may soon take him to himself!" The poor Beauty—

Well and did my turkey eat well—and were you merry? Who dined with you? or were you all alone?—I called on the Proctors and saw Mrs.— and left a bird for them—and on the day I came here, I was touched on the shoulder, and when I turned, there was my dear little Barry,[1] all muffled up from the cold, and his kind blue eyes, come to thank me. I was sorry I could not go to eat with him.

I return to London on Thursday, and shall be there for near a week; as I have a heap of engagements to fulfil. But in the middle of the week after this, I shall be borne down into Suffolk again, and tell you all the wonders I have met. How do you like Vestiges of Creation?—Are you all turned infidels—or Atheists, as Mrs. Turly was minded to become. I have not thought very much of the *Acarus Crossii* since I have been here; but I shall meditate upon it again when I get to Suffolk. Here one's

[1] Bryan Waller Proctor, who wrote under the name of Barry Cornwall.

thoughts are quite enough occupied with the phenomenon of living with the roaring unsophisticated ocean at one side, and four miles length of idle, useless ornamental population on the other—

I find in these older Blackwoods some fine papers by De Quincey, as I suppose. Surely no one else can roll out such sentences as I find here —a style which has not yet quite subsided from the Opium agitation—

And now I am going to eat some lunch and go to Church. It rains cats and dogs—We are all pretty well here. On Thursday I shall be at Charlotte St, Rathbone Place—mind that—

And now I am ever yrs

EDWD FITZGERALD

LONDON, *Saturday*
[*Jany. 11th* 1845]

DEAR BARTON,

My illness has been no more than a cold—which made me snivel for 3 days—and is now gone—Thank you for your enquiries however. Land is in sight! Yo ho!—in the middle of next week I shall form a trio with dog and cat in the cottage parlour!—I have visited here chiefly for

my Father; whom I have just left till dinner time—He dines with the Woods tomorrow—I am going to call on them today—now—in half an hour—

I spent one evening with Carlyle, but was very dull somehow, and delighted to get out into the street. An organ was playing a polka even so late in the street: and Carlyle was rather amazed to see me polka down the pavement—He shut his street door—to which he always accompanies you—with a kind of groan—He was looking well —but he says he gets no sleep of nights. This comes of having a great idea, which germinating once in the mind, grows like a tape worm, and consumes the vitals. What a nasty idea—

Last night I went to hear Handel's *Messiah*— nobly done. But here again I was glad to get into the street before it was half over. So I doubt I cant hold out the heroic long. "Let me plant cabbages!" was the well considered prayer of Panurge; and it is rather mine. But honour to the Carlyles, who, giving up their own prospect of cabbages, toil and sweat in the spirit that we may plant ours in peace.

Dont you like to get a letter upon a Sunday more than on any other day in the week?—Have

you read a foolish looking letter by Mr. Edge in the *Ipswich Journal?* It is about Dissent. I say foolish-looking, because I only looked at it in Portland Place just now. So I am the fool, by that logic. But Edge combats an ultra Churchman who asserted that a Dissenting Chapel was the cradle of all vice; and Edge says it is not *quite* so bad as that. This is a wretched position to take—And he says "Let us be just before we are logical" ! ! ! My powers! What would Plato say to this! As if justice were not the very outcome of logic—The old saying "Be just before you are generous" distinguishes this well.

I dont think this letter is heroic enough to make *you* dance the Polka when you've got through it—And now it is high time for you to be off to your meeting: so mind you dont *polk* there. That would be worse than a Quaker murdering. You ought not to be ashamed of one murderer: your community should keep his body in a glass case for ever.

Farewell. Ever yrs
EFG.

The picture mirrored to the mind's eye by the parting of FitzGerald and Carlyle at the door of

5 Cheyne Row on that night in January 1845 is one that is not likely to fade. It is so comical: so unexpected. Mid-winter in London; a narrow, dimly lit street; a late barrel-organ dismally grinding out dance music. The two men emerge from a door exchanging farewell greetings, and then, suddenly, FitzGerald—the staid, gentle, melancholy Recluse—breaks into dance step and so whirling along the pavement disappears into the darkness while Carlyle closes his door with a deep groan.

19 Charlotte St. &c
*Friday*
(*Jany* 17. 1845)

Dear Barton,

I was all prepared for going into Suffolk today: but I got a note from A. Tennyson yesterday, saying he was coming to London, and wished to see me. So I waited: and last night he came: looking much better: but a valetudinarian almost:—not in the effeminate way; but yet in as bad a man's way. Alas for it, that great thoughts are to be lapped in such weakness—Dr. Allen, who had half swindled his money, is dead: and A.T. having a Life insurance, and Policy, on him, will now, I hope,

retrieve the greater part of his fortune again. Apollo certainly did this: shooting one of his swift arrows at the heart of the Doctor; whose perfectly heartless conduct certainly upset A.T.'s nerves in the first instance.

I have sent your letter and enclosure to Mrs. Jones:—for you do not specify *what* the situation is—But I hope she will enquire directly, and satisfy herself. It is very good of you to remember her—Ah! I shall be glad to be back in the land where such little offices are thought of! Could it be offered to me to write another Iliad, or to live down to my three score years and ten (if it is for me to fulfil that number) in the daily remembrance of such small charities, I should not hesitate which to choose—Of all sayings, none is to me so touching as that of the good Emperor Titus—"I have lost a day!"—I always wonder Dante did not expatiate more on one who certainly was so Christian at heart—

I have bought two heads lately: for 30 shillings apiece—one Venetian as usual: the other a very sweet sketch by Harlow, or Sir J. Lawrence —as I think. The latter is much injured and must be repaired. You shall see it one day: and you will like it much. Tell Churchyard I am

*angry* he did not come and see me. There he was gadding over London for 3 days.

Farewell. Next Monday or Tuesday! On then I fix my eyes. Ever yrs

E.F.G.

Thackeray travels in the East: I send you one of his Punch sketches[1] concerning his travels.

HALVERSTOWN. KILCULLEN.
(*August* 2/45)

MY DEAR BARTON,

I will write you a line, if it be but a line. For you must know I never felt less able to spin out even a note-sheet of the thinnest gossamer—I think this climate lazifies one; you know that is the character of the Irish. I have just written to Crabbe as much as I can write to you; it would not be decent to repeat what I have said to him word for word to you; and I protest I exhausted all that would come into my head.

Only this—tell Churchyard I saw the Crome —I wrote him a note about it (did he get it?) I saw that Crome, I say, go for £9. I did not think it worth more. All the pictures were going very

[1] A man in bed: on his head a night cap. He is sitting up, surrounded by a swarm of mosquitoes, and is in the act of seizing a flea on the counterpane.

cheap, they said: I bought a good portrait for £7, but not for myself. I should suppose the large Constable would go for under £100—as the sale was so close on the end of the season, and people impoverished or tired of buying. Churchyard will remember Archbutt's large Constable; it was to be sold the day I left London.

Well, and how does your stereotype get on; and when are you to come forth? Let me hear some news of yourself and of Suffolk. I hope you have lost all your lumbago.

This is a wretched letter, to be sure. But then the merit of writing ever so little quite against the grain is as great as writing ever so much when the pen runs before a steady impulse of communication. So take will for deed; and believe me

Yrs ever

EDWARD FITZGERALD

IRELAND.
*August* 15/45

MY DEAR BARTON,

Tomorrow I leave Paddyland and draw homeward, staying some while at Bedford. I may also go to Naseby for a day or two. But my easily-wearied heart yearns to be at home again

—I was to have gone to meet Allen in Wales; but I have refreshed myself with the opal tints of the Wicklow hills here, and I want no more. A line of distant hills is all we want in Suffolk. A landscape should have that image of futurity in it—

I had a very queer hyppish note from Crabbe; lamenting that he could only interest himself in one subject, which would not interest me, viz, the truth of the Evangelical doctrine; and still harping on my pride &c. I fancy he has these occasional seasons of doubt &c. I have written to laugh at him; which I hope he wont take ill; for I regard the man too much to risk a quarrel with him. Where would one find such another in any other country but England? How honest and determined his obstinacy!—

I suppose Carlyle's book must be on the point of appearing. At all events he must have almost done *his* part. He told me that he had done so much for the illustration of Cromwell's letters &c that he doubted if he should ever write any further Life of him—So get this; it is sure to have much more good than bad in it. I told C. that the more I read of Cromwell the more I was forced to agree with the verdict of the world about him. Carlyle only grunted and sent forth

a prodigious blast of tobacco smoke. He smokes indignantly—

You say nothing of the state of harvest &c in Suffolk. The crops about here are very good, and only want sunshine now to crown a full cup of harvest—Ireland is wonderfully improved (this part of it, at least) in the last two years even.

Is your book out? Are you come out in imperishable hot press yet?

Here is a story for you to tell in company. It will do when the conversation happens to turn on toll gates, women, or breeches. There, pull out your snuff box, take a pinch, and relate this authentic story; that Dr. Welsh of Noas told us —He stopped in his gig at a toll gate the other night; the toll man could not get on his breeches quickly. Next day, Welsh passed the same way; the good woman then opened the toll gate, and Welsh joked with her about her husband's inaptitude in putting on his breeches &c. "Ah plase your honour, its no wonder," said she, "sure he hasn't worn them at all at all for this long while"—

Ever yrs

E.F.G.

Direct to the P.O. Bedford if you write.

[Boulge Cottage 1845]

Dear B.B.

Come by all means tomorrow, an thou wilt. Do not come if it rains like this. I will ask Crabbe, who I have no doubt will come; for though Woodbridge is far for him to go out to in the evening, we may reckon Boulge as a midway place where happy spirits may alight between Bredfield and Woodbridge.

I have a letter from Cowell. Perhaps he also will ride over tomorrow—

Bring up with thee a pound of Derby Cheese, for a toast: and some oysters, with knives; that thou mayst eat. And I will pay thee the cost—I have a fowl hanging up: and if my Father's cook arrive, as I think she will, tonight, she shall handsell her skill on my fowl. For I doubt Mrs. Faier's powers of Bread-sauce—I doubt she would produce a sort of dumpling. But Sarah knows about these things.

Only think. Robert Peel has given A. Tennyson £200 pension—I suppose so much a year.—

I don't think him the less a humbug for this.

Yrs.

E. F.

GELDESTONE. *Monday*
(*Dec.* 29. 1845)

DEAR BARTON,

Thanks for your letter. I am glad Turkey and Sausage did so well. We had our Feast here also, which did as well as most things of the kind. The children mostly eat as much as they could, and more than was good for them, and looked paler all next day in consequence.

I expect to be home by the end of this week, or early next week. I want to see how my draining at the Cottage goes on. One may rejoice, I think, in the Snow forbearing us so long. What a day, however, was this day week, when I came hither!—

This note is but to acknowledge yours: for I have positively nothing to say. Such total bankruptcies will happen in men's wits every now and then. I have sat over this little sheet of paper a quarter of an hour, looking up and asking intelligence of the ceiling, the furniture of the room, and the lawn before the window —But no thought reducible to paper comes. Take will for deed, and believe me yrs as ever

EDWARD FITZGERALD.

Do give the enclosed paper to Daddy Loder,[1] and bid him get me the book.

GELDESTONE. *Saturday*
(*Feb.* 14, 1846)

MY DEAR BARTON,

If you should chance to expect a letter from [me] *this* Sunday morning, lo! you are not disappointed. I believe Sunday is a good day to get letters on. I had a letter from Crabbe yesterday, which I answered forthwith. His verses show the feeling which he has deep in him, and feeling is half of the poetic element at least. Practice would have made him turn out his thoughts in a cleaner shape: but practice is just the thing which *us* unprofessional poets (I mean such as I and Crabbe) want.

Now answer me this—Are you or any other Woodbridge men or women going to Kesgrave on Thursday?—I am axed[2] from that day till Saturday; shall go for the Friday at least—Does Meller go? or any other of the tragedians?—

I am not surprised at the sale of Churchyard's pictures: except as regards your little Wilson; for which I should have thought £2 a good sum. His Morland deserved more; but was

[1] An Ipswich bookseller.

[2] Suffolk for "asked."

very likely not to get more, because of its size. I think those Cupids met with their deserts—

I wrote to Donne to ask him here for a day on his road to Yarmouth, whither he talked of going to stay with Dawson Turner. But I have heard nothing of him; and now it will be too late; for I must get back to Boulge as early next week as I can.

One cannot pity Mrs. Sheppard. I suppose no one does. I went to call on Lord Berners the other day, but he was out. And now I must go out: for a covey of children with bonnets on are waiting for Uncle Edward to take them to a great gravel-pit in the middle of a fir-wood, where they may romp and slide down at pleasure—This is Saturday, and they may dirty stockings and frocks as much as they please.

My sister begs her kind remembrance to you and Miss Barton: and I am yours ever,

EDWARD FITZGERALD.

A short digression from the main current of the letters may here, not inopportunely, be made to show the Quaker poet at a dinner party in London.

In a letter to Donne dated March 8th, 1846, FitzGerald thus gives the quaint preliminaries which led up to the invitation.

"Our friend Barton is certainly one of the most remarkable men of the Age. After writing to Peel two separate Sonnets, begging him to retire to Tamworth and not alter the Corn Laws, he finally sends him another letter to ask if he will be present at Lord Northampton's soirée[1] next Saturday; Barton himself being about to go to that soirée, and wishing to see the Premier. On which Peel writes him a most good-humoured note asking him to dine at Whitehall Gardens on that same Saturday![2] And the good Barton is going up for that purpose. All this is great simplicity in Barton: and really announces an internal Faith that is creditable to this Age, and almost unexpected in it. I had advised him not to send Peel any more Sonnets till the Corn Law was passed; the Indian war arranged; and Oregon settled; but Barton sees no dragon in the way."

[1] Lord Northampton was then President of the Royal Society.

[2] WHITEHALL, 5 *March*

DEAR SIR

I have already attended one of the evening meetings at the house of the President of the Royal Society.

If you will give me the pleasure of your company at dinner on Saturday, the 14th March at ¼ before 8 o'clock, I shall have a still better opportunity of improving our personal acquaintance.

Faithfully yours,

ROBERT PEEL.

The following letter from Barton to one of his friends, which has been preserved, gives an interesting and delightfully naïve description of the Premier's dinner party.

Carlyle also attended one of Peel's dinner parties about the same time, and the account he gave of it in his Journal may be quoted[1] after Barton's letter to show how the two men—so widely different in temperament and outlook—agree in their descriptions of Peel's great personal charm and kindly human ways.

*Barton's Letter.*

WOODBRIDGE, 3/18/46.

MY DEAR FRIEND,

I fear I can ill give thee an account of my visit, worth thy reading—for going about addles my poor head sadly, and to do so on two successive Saturdays makes me feel during the interim in every way incapable of letter writing—But thou art desirous to hear something, so I will make an effort.

On the Seventh day I went a little before the time set to make a call a priori on William and

[1] *Carlyle's Life in London*, Froude, 1890, vol. i, p. 465, quoted by kind permission of Messrs. Longmans, Green & Co.

Charlotte Wood,[1] who live very little way off Whitehall—The former forewarned me I should find the premier, though most polite, rather cold in his manners—but that after I was once fairly over the reception I should have little further to do with, or say to him, unless I sought him, and that I might probably be both amused and interested with folks whom I might meet there. By going early he said I should hear the names of all who came after me announced on their entrée, and by that means I could know, for the most part, who were there. I got to P's at the time fixed to a minute—and found in the vestibule four or six powdered men folk in livery, with a formidable perspective of more of the same sort on the different landings of the staircase—one of these took my hat and gloves—another enquired my name which he called out to one on the first landing, who passed it on—it was repeated by the last at the door of the room just as I was entering—and Sir Robert came forward to welcome me in a *manner* more frank and cordial than I could have at all looked for. If put on—twas well put on, that's all I

[1] William Page Wood; afterwards Baron Hatherley, the Lord Chancellor. He married Major Moor's daughter.

can say—Finding, after a very hearty hand shaking that I had not yet got the use of my tongue very fluently, he turned to the only three guests who had come before me, and were chatting away with their backs to us at the moment—and said "As there are but these three gentlemen before you, I will introduce you to them at once—" The first was Dr. Buckland, the Geologist—the next Stevenson, an engineer of eminence, the third I understood him to call Mr. Farish—We just exchanged courteous silent greetings and I was turning away from them when a second glance at the last named gent convinced me that his had been a familiar face to me. I looked at him more closely and putting out my hand exclaimed in a tone by no means of the lowest key—"George Airy!" He started and in a moment responded as audibly "Why Mr. Barton! Who would have dreamt of our meeting here!" at the same time shaking me heartily by the hand—Sir Robert, who stood close by, seemed rather tickled by our recognition —and said "I see gentlemen, you have met before." "Yes," responded the Astronomer Royal, "Mr. Barton and I are friends of well nigh thirty years standing." This rencontre put

an entirely new aspect on the whole meeting and in spite of the splendour of all round me—and dining off plate, and sitting down with about thirty other guests, to be served by a host of liveried lacqueys, I felt as much at home as if I had been dining at Kesgrave, Boulge, or Loudham! I never saw a dinner in which the host seemed to take so quiet and unobtrusive a part. He appeared to make it a point to receive everyone in a frank and friendly manner on their entrance and then to take it as a matter of course that they would amuse themselves and each other—He sate in the middle of one side of the table, and conversed with the two who sate right and left of him—everyone else did the same—and there was no general conversation,—nor any such thing as taking wine with one another. The larger dishes were carved at the side tables, and plates of fish, flesh, fowl, or what not handed round, each one taking what he chose. The wine went round exactly in the same manner—and the dessert was served after the same fashion —only during it there were fewer servants in attendance—The dinner was not so lengthy an affair as I had dreaded—and after we rose from the table and adjourned to the drawing room and

Picture Gallery the evening was about as pleasant an one as I have often spent—The Company got into little groups of three, four, or six—and chatted; or strolled about looking at the pictures. Sir Robert who soon saw these had considerable attraction for me, walked round with me, and pointed out several of his own greatest favorites —Before the splendid one of Knox preaching, painted for him by Wilkie, I think we must have stood nearly a quarter of an hour while he pointed out to me the different characters pourtrayed in it—and two or three times after when I found any picture on which I wanted information, on my going to him to enquire about—he would leave the group he was listening to, or talking with, and go with me to the painting to tell me all I wished to learn about it. On the whole I think I had full as much of our host's attention as fell to my share, perhaps a trifle more—and the little conversaziones I occasionally fell in with and listened to, were amusing and interesting. Not one word of politics did I hear dropt—all the talk was literary, scientific—on the fine arts—or the extraordinary forwardness of the seasons—The tact and gentlemanly manner in which the host

joined sometimes one group, and then another, and then without any seeming art or intention, became himself the focus of a third, was all to me matter of interest—for after all it was the quiet and unobserved study of the Man rendered by circumstances one of the most extraordinary Men of his age, which was to me the great object of interest—I am not aware that my opinions of the sound policy, or true wisdom of his *measures* are materially altered—but my opinion of his personal amiability, if nothing better, is certainly confirmed. Our talk, to be sure, was chiefly about his Pictures, but even on them little touches of natural feeling occasionally oozed out which led me to give him credit for somewhat more of a heart than a Man with a head so inevitably filled with worldly affairs might be supposed to have. He lingered with me much longer before Wilkie's picture of Knox preaching than he did before Ruben's Chapeau de Paille —though the latter cost £12,000, as I have heard, and is reputed to be the glory of his collection, but I am not sure we did not look as long at a Picture of one of his children, a little girl, with a dog asleep on her lap, as at either. This was a painting by Sir Thomas Lawrence

and one of the loveliest pictures of girlish happiness and innocence, I think, that I ever looked at. The frame of the companion to it was empty, I understood it contained one of another of his girls now in the hands of the engraver. I will not assert that much of this might not be put on—but if so it was very naturally assumed, and had all the semblance of being perfectly sincere and true—and so had his look and tone when he told me it was the greatest earthly gratification he could snatch when he could escape from the turmoil of all politics, and spend a quiet half hour in his gallery among his pictures; standing or sitting awhile, first before one, and then before another—His few critical comments, too, were not made to all appearance, in any spirit of dilettanteism, but seemed simple and natural. On the whole, I left his Premiership after a leave taking as seemingly cordial as his reception, with certainly no *diminished* feelings of respect and esteem for *the Man*. Nothing was dropped to recal the Minister, his invitation to me had been for the express purpose of improving our personal acquaintance—and I, at any rate, had no temptation to "travel out of the record." I went to his house at a quarter before eight and

left it exactly at eleven. The company were quite as much scientific as political. All the names I can now recollect were Dr. Buckland, Airy, Professor Owen (the naturalist), Playfair, Wheatstone, Farraday, and Brande—McCulloch —Stevenson, Eastlake, (the painter) &c. &c. —the only ostensibly literary guest with whom I had much talk was Hallam, the historian of the Middle Ages—There were of course lots of M.P.'s—but even their talk was unsenatorial —This I think is all I can tell thee of my visit, and the impression it has left on me. I should not greatly covet many such—but one such glimpse into a world so new to me was quite worth going up for. If I get as well through my scrape the last night of this week, as I have through its precursor, I shall think myself fortunate. Airy has all but promised to meet me at the Mqs.s[1] and so has Lockhart—with the latter I am to breakfast on the second day morning after—and then I think I shall have seen enough of high life, and literary lions to content me.

If I thought thee in earnest about my brief intercourse with these people, having lessened

[1] The Marquis of Northampton.

my relish for social enjoyment with old friends, I should seriously remonstrate and expostulate—but though I can not get to Hopton this Spring or Summer, I am not at all afraid that my absence will be imputed to any feeling of that sort.

Ever affectionately,

B.B.

*Carlyle's Journal.*

There was a great party, Prescott, Milman, Barry (architect), Lord Mahon, Sheil, Gibson (sculptor), Cubitt (builder), etc. etc. About Prescott I cared little, and indeed, there or elsewhere, did not speak with him at all; but what I noted of Peel I will now put down. I was the second that entered the big drawing-room, a picture gallery as well, which looks out over the Thames (Whitehall Gardens, second house to the eastward of Montague House), commands Westminster Bridge too, with its wrecked parapets (old Westminster Bridge), and the new Parliament Houses, being, I fancy, of *semicircular* figure in that part and projecting into the shore of the river. Old Cubitt, a hoary,

modest, sensible-looking man, was alone with Peel when I entered. My reception was abundantly cordial. Talk went on about the new Houses of Parliament, and the impossibility or difficulty of hearing in them—others entering, Milman, etc., joined in as I had done. Sir Robert, in his mild kindly voice, talked of the difficulties architects had in making out that part of their problem. Nobody then knew how it was to be done: *filling* of a room with people sometimes made it audible (witness his own experience in the College Rector's time, which he briefly mentioned to us) sometimes it had been managed by hanging up cloth curtains etc. Joseph Hume, reporting from certain Edinburgh mathematicians, had stated that the best big room for being heard in, that was known in England, was a Quakers' meeting-house near Cheltenham. I have forgot the precise place.

People now came in thick and rapid. I went about the gallery with those already come and saw little more of Sir Robert then. I remember in presenting Barry to Prescott he said with kindly emphasis, "I have wished to show you some of our most distinguished men; allow me to introduce," etc. Barry had been getting re-

buked in the House of Commons in those very days or hours and had been defended there by Sir Robert. Barry, when I looked at him, did not turn out by any means such a fool as his pepper-box architecture would have led one to guess—on the contrary, a broad solid man with much ingenuity and even delicacy of expression, who had well employed his sixty years or so of life in looking out for himself, and had unhappily found pepper-box architecture his Goshen![1] From the distance I did not dislike him at all. Panizzi, even *Scribe*, came to the dinner, no ladies there; nothing but two sons of Peel, one at each end, he himself in the middle about opposite to where I sate; Mahon on his left hand, on his right Van de Weyer (Belgian ambassador); not a creature there for whom I cared one penny, except Peel himself. Dinner sumptuous and excellently served, but I should think rather wearisome to everybody, as it certainly was to me. After all the servants but the butler were gone, we began to hear a little of Peel's quiet talk across the table, unimportant, distinguished by its sense of the ludicrous shining through a strong

[1] Carlyle refers to the Houses of Parliament then being built after Barry's design.

official *rationality*, and even seriousness of temper. Distracted *address* of a letter from somebody to Queen Victoria: 'The most noble George Victoria, Queen of England, Knight and Baronet,' or something like that. A man had once written to Peel himself, while Secretary, that he was weary of life, that if any gentleman wanted for his park-woods a hermit, he, etc; all of which was very pretty and human as Peel gave it to us. In rising we had some question about the pictures in his dining-room, which are Wilkie's (odious) John Knox at the entrance end, and at the opposite three, or perhaps four, all by Reynolds; Dr. Johnson, original of the engravings one sees; Reynolds himself by his own pencil, and two, or perhaps three, other pictures. Doubts rising about who some lady portrait was, I went to the window and asked Sir Robert himself, who turned with alacrity and talked to us about that and the rest. The *hand* in Johnson's portrait brought an anecdote from him about Wilkie and it at Drayton. Peel spread his own hand over it, an inch or two off, to illustrate or enforce—as fine a man's hand as I remember to have seen, strong, delicate, and scrupulously clean. Upstairs, most

of the people having soon gone, he showed us his volumes of autographs—Mirabeau, Johnson, Byron, Scott, and many English Kings and officialities: excellent cheerful talk and description; human, but official in all things. Then, with a cordial shake of the hand, dismissal; and the Bishop of Oxford (*mirum!*), insisting on it, took me home in his carriage.

Barton does not appear to have broached the great question of the hour—the Repeal of the Corn Laws—in his conversation with the Premier; though it is probable that he accepted the invitation to dinner with that purpose in mind. Dazzled a little, perhaps, by the glitter of such exalted surroundings, and pleasantly surprised by the cordiality of Peel and his distinguished guests, the Quaker may have forgotten his grievance, or been disarmed by their *bonhomie*. Or, what is still more likely, he may have been quick to perceive that discussion of political questions was debarred at the Premier's dinner parties. But though he carried away so favourable an impression of Peel the Man, he still continued to feel strongly that Peel the Minister was endeavouring to inflict

an unjust measure upon the Suffolk farmers. He accordingly continued to urge his protests against the Bill, couched in feeble verse, up to the very eve of the passing of the measure.

The following interesting letter to Barton from Lockhart—at that time editor of the *Quarterly Review*—shows that he too had been the recipient of one of the Quaker poet's poetical effusions on the burning question. Lockhart's letter, it will be observed, was written two months after the dinner party, and only a month before the Corn Bill became law.

*May* 21, 1846.
LONDON.

MY DEAR SIR,

Your lines are very good ones, and I see no contradiction in disliking the measure and giving the most perfect credit to the Man for conscientious motives. Who can ascribe any other, except the embittered victims of personal spleen and envy, whom he could crush with a word if that were not *infra dig.* and whose hour of exposure will come some day, tho' never I hope from such a hand as his.

I don't pretend to have much right to an

opinion on the great controversy itself. But I fear that Peel has, in place of acting from over reliance on himself, allowed himself to be swayed imperceptibly by colleagues whose brains might be centupled without matching his own head-piece. I also fear he has so mismanaged his party that it is on the eve of a total temporary breakup, so that we must, after probably one or two rickety abortive attempts at amalgamation, expect first a new Whig and radical regime of some duration before the Conservative feeling shall have again developed itself throughout the sane part of the Nation as it did during Melbourne's later reign. And by that time, if Sir R.P. be still in full vigour of body and mind, which he ought to be for a long term of years yet, I have not a shadow of doubt that faith in him will have been fully restored.

Yours truly,

J. G. LOCKHART.

60 CHARLOTTE ST.
RATHBONE PLACE.
(*April* 1846).

MY DEAR BARTON,

I have been very bilious and very resentful of this London atmosphere. And all episto-

lary power has left me. I have been able to manage no book but Mrs. Trollope's novels: of which one, *The Robertses on their Travels* is very entertaining and, I think, instructive. I wish our good folks who go abroad yearly to stare, make fools of themselves, and learn much less good than evil, would read and take to heart the true picture of so many of them drawn in that novel—

I sent Churchyard a note some days ago, apprizing him of my locality, and hoping I should see him ere long. I keep all my picture expeditions till he comes up. Indeed, I have lost all appetite for such sights: and I think would go further to see a bit of clear blue sky over a furze-blossomed heath than any Titian in the world.

On Thursday I dined with a large party at Portland Place, among the company your friend *Ainsworth* figures: and your other friend *Wilson* comes to sing to us in the evening. Ainsworth is, in my opinion, a *Snob;* but I don't reveal my opinion at P.P.—Tennyson and I sometimes get a walk and a talk together. He is no Snob. He has lately been standing as Godfather to one of Dickens's children—Count d'Orsay being the other Godfather—insomuch

that the poor child will be named "Alfred d'Orsay Tennyson Dickens!" proving clearly enough, I think, that Dickens is a *Snob*—For what is Snobbishness and Cockneyism but all such pretension and parade? It is one thing to worship Heroes; and another to lick up their spittle—

I expect Edward Cowell to-day. He comes to London to see his Lady, and to buy Persian books. I shall be glad to see him; he will bring up a waft of Suffolk air with him—O! the bit of salmon I eat yesterday! I feel it within me like churchyard[1] fat—I scratch out a capital C because I mean like a burial place and not any person. Farewell for the present.

Ever yrs, E.F.G.

60 Charlotte St.,
Rathbone Place.
(*May 4th* 1846).

My dear Barton,

You will think me very negligent. Crabbe, I suppose, will think I am offended with him. For I owe him and you a letter this

[1] The first letter in the word has been scratched out, and a small "c" substituted for a capital.

long while, I think. But I have no wits to write with in this London, where, positively, I have not enjoyed one hour's clear health since I have been in it.

Tomorrow Tennyson and I are going to get a pint or two of fresh air at Richmond: and we are to wind up our day at Carlyle's by way of a refreshing evening's entertainment. I met C. last night at Tennyson's; and they two discussed the merits of this world, and the next, till I wished myself out of *this*, at any rate. Carlyle gets more wild, savage, and unreasonable every day; and, I do believe, will turn mad. "What is the use of ever so many rows of stupid, fetid, animals in cauliflower wigs—and clean lawn sleeves—calling themselves Bishops—Bishops, I say, of the Devil—not of God—obscene creatures parading between men's eyes, and the eternal light of Heaven," &c. &c. This, with much abstruser nonconformity for 2 whole hours!—and even as it was yesterday, so shall it be to-morrow, and the day after that—in sæcula sæculorum!—

I met Ainsworth at P.P. but had not much talk with him, and did not give him your love. He works very hard at gentility now. Church-

yard has doubtless told you of his jaunt with me; and I suppose you have fallen greatly in love with his two little fruit pieces. I have done nothing since. Indeed, I don't go into the streets now, but get out by the Regent's Park to Primrose Hill, where the air is a little purer.

Thank Miss Barton for the book extracts she sent me. And drive over round by Boulge Cottage one afternoon and tell me if my anemones and irises are in full glow. My heart would leap up to see them.

Farewell. Ever yrs E. F. G.

In a letter to Barton written at Leamington in the previous autumn but one (Sept. 28, 1844) FitzGerald had told him of his intention to plant the anemones and irises here mentioned in the garden at Boulge Cottage. He wrote: "I have bought anemone roots which in the Spring shall blow Tyrian dyes, and Irises of a newer and more brilliant prism than Noah saw in the clouds."

The beauty of these exquisite metaphors, so casually flung off his pen to foretell the joy these flowers would give him in the spring combine, to reveal the Poet and the Colourist in him.

Bedford
*Sept* 19/46

Dear Barton,

I got here some days ago: and here I am likely to be for another fortnight. After that, a week at Cambridge, may be: after *that*, deponent sayeth not. But long ere winter I shall be making up my dormitory at Boulge, there to abide till another Year shall open new prospects —fresh fields and pastures new—

As you write to Crabbe, pray tell him where I am got to: and that I desire an answer to my 2nd letter, which I sent him from Lowestoft. He attacked me most furiously on the old score of *Pride*, on which the man is distracted: and so I told him. He may have written to Lowestoft after I left it. But if he be not too far gone in indignation with me, he will do no hurt by writing yet again. I am dropped out of his Category of Heroes for ever! he shall always be right glad to see me, he says: but he never can be disappointed in me again! How much the best footing is this to be upon with all one's friends—

Tell Churchyard that I saw at Beccles the large Collection of Pictures belonging to Mr. *Delf*, with whom you bargained for your *Piper*

*Evelyn*—His pictures are all richly framed, and highly varnished: and contain some indubitable Titians, Rembrandts, and Raphaels. For the rest, I saw about 3 small Flemish pictures which I thought worth having—A small Jan Steen: and an old woman smelling at a pink, by one of the Teniers school: capital I thought. Delf wants £14.000 for the whole collection: I should suppose £150 to be the fair price—Would Churchyard be so kind as to hang up, or let you hang up, my little Stothard landscape, so as to keep it out of mischief, and *in* the light?— If I should pass through London, I might chance upon a frame that would suit it. Also ask C. what is the price of the Wotton horse-piece, which he showed me before I left. I wish C. could be here; as the river Ouse shows some pretty things, and I should be so happy to entertain him if he came.

This note I write before breakfast: but the good Alderman Browne now descends in his dressing gown, and his broiled bacon lies upon its toast ready for him. Yesterday we dined under the ruins of a noble old place at Ampthill—The last stupid Duke of Bedford dismantled it, as he does many others, in order that Woburn may

be the only great gun in Bedfordshire—Farewell; pray give my kind remembrances to Miss Barton (how does the *Scripture History*[1] go on?) and believe me

Yrs ever

E. F. G.

Direct me at Alderman Browne's
Caldwell Street
Bedford.

Goldington Hall
Bedford
(*Sept.* 1846)

My dear Barton,

Thank you for your long and kindly letter. My stay here draws to a close: winds begin to blow cold and gusty, as you say, and leaves to fall; and it is time to draw homewards. I had intended to go and visit some cities in the West, where I yet look one day to reside. A reason, I assure you, beyond love of change, draws me, or will one day draw me (if I have resolution to move) beyond Suffolk—At least, so I now believe: but I would give much were it otherwise—But

[1] A book for school children Miss Barton was writing with FitzGerald's collaboration.

time will prove this and many more important things—I make a kind of inward groan—which I will not put down on paper as Carlyle does—I had a note from that worthy a few days since, which I enclose, though there is not much in it. Do not be at the trouble of returning it, for I do not want it.

Thank Miss Barton heartily for her kindness to good Mrs. Faiers. I only doubt she will make her too proud by such honours. I am just about to write a note home about my garden. After I leave this place, I shall go to Cambridge for awhile. But all this I think I told you before.

Tell Churchyard I shall be glad to buy his picture for the sum he names: because W. Browne, with whom I now am, would be very much delighted with it in case I should not desire to keep it. As you say, it is the old English life of it that makes it interesting, and I fancy I should like a few such memorials of the last century. These are to be found in all English country seats, and are constantly selling dirt-cheap at auctions, hung up in garrets &c. They are historical things to us. Two or three of those pictures at Easton touched me livelily.

I have been looking over parts of Croker's Edition of Boswell, and cannot but think that Carlyle has dealt unjustly with it. Surely it *is* a good edition—The last two volumes besides contain anecdotes of Johnson from the people —anecdotes I had never seen before. Miss Reynolds (Sir Joshua's sister) describes the nervous gesticulations he used in the street, and before entering a room—a sort of penance-exercise, it seemed. Does Boswell describe this?—As usual, when once I took up the magical book, I could have sat down and read it all through right on end: but I found it at a clergyman's house near here, where I was staying for two days, and so could only devour two days' worth of it. Carlyle did a great work when he cleared away all the confusion of opinion that was abroad about this book—about Johnson and Boswell themselves—and settled the question for ever: setting up Johnson as a good representative of the English character—solid sense—dogmatic prejudice—veneration—melancholy temperament &c—

This is a short and meagre letter, returning you no such news as you sent me. But take the will for the deed. I write in a cold room, *wishing*

for a fire, but of course not able to command, or hint, one in a friend's house. I believe, as you say, Crabbe has forgiven me; but I heartily hope he will never replace me on the pedestal from which he so lately took me down. "I would not rise, and so shant fear to fall."

And so from my happy station on the common mortal ground I salute you and him.

Yrs. ever E. F. G.

Carlyle's letter, which FitzGerald did not care to have returned to him, has fortunately been preserved, and is now, for the first time, published.

CHELSEA. *22 Septr*, 1846.

DEAR FITZGERALD,

Your letter finds me *here;* where I have been for some ten days now,—mostly *asleep*, for I arrived in a very wearied state. There is therefore nothing to be said about any further wandering, for a good while to come!

My Pilgrimage, so far as immediate improvement in health or spirits went, was none of the successfullest: I was dreadfully knocked about with one tumult and another; and indeed in the

whole course of my journeyings, could find no place half as quiet for me as Chelsea, with an empty London behind it, now is.

After a couple of weeks in Lancashire, I went across to Scotland; saw rainy weather, rotten potatoes, brutal drunken *Navvies*, and other unpleasant phenomena; went no further North than Dumfriesshire;—at length, with a dead-lift effort, decided to pass over into Ireland, by Ardrossan and Belfast, not with any hope of profit or enjoyment at all, but merely to redeem a promise I had given in those quarters. For some days accordingly I did see a bit of Ireland; roamed over the streets of Dublin, a little among the Wicklow Hills; saw Daniel in his green cap in Conciliation Hall (the hugest *palpable* Humbug I had ever set eyes on); listened to Young Ireland (with hope that *it* might yet turn to something); regretted much you were not with me to look on all that;—finally, by Liverpool and the swiftest power of Steam, had myself tumbled out here, and so winded up the matter. My Wife, who had not gone farther than Lancashire, was here to receive me a fortnight before: much improved in health she; I too expect to feel myself a gainer by these painful locomotions by

and by. The thinnest-skinned creature cannot be left *always* to sit covered under a tub; must be pitched out, from time to time, into the general hurly burly, and ordered to bestir himself a little.

From Moxon I heard the other day that Tennyson and he *had* just been in Switzerland; that T. was actually at that time in Town, his address unknown; Moxon was himself just bound for Ramsgate,—undertook to send Alfred to me if he could; but has not succeeded hitherto. Thackeray I have heard of at Boulogne or Brighton; Spedding I missed in Cumberland: I think there is nobody yet here whom you know; but indeed I keep out of all people's way as much as may be. Do you know Poet Browning? He is just *wedded*, as his card testifies this morning; the *Mrs.* Browning still an enigma to us here. "Conciliation Hall" appeared to me to be on its last legs.—Tell Browne, with compliments, my Horse was sold in Annandale, £35 to a much admiring neighbour of my Brother's there—Come you and see us, speedily, and hear all the news.

Ever yours

T. Carlyle.

60 Charlotte St.
Fitzroy Square
(*Jan.* 1847)

My dear Barton,

Lest you should begin to consider that I had forsook you, like so many other faithless correspondents—I will endite to you this morning:—notwithstanding my head aches, and I feel (as usual in London) disinclined to the business of composition—If I see any frame such as you want, I will book it for you: but I have had no time for picture-hunting. What with people coming to see me, and I going to see them. I took a look in at Christie's yesterday, in passing: but there was nothing worth looking at—much less buying. Pray tell this to Churchyard; who wished to know about it. I ought not to forget to say however that there was one picture: an early Wilson: a view of Sion House:[1] —true, pure, and in some respects admirable—

[1] Now in the possession of Lord Glenconner. An interesting story is attached to this picture. It was sent by Wilson for exhibition at the Royal Academy in 1776. On behalf of Geroge III Lord Bute—who was Lord Chamberlain at that time—offered to buy the picture. Wilson named sixty guineas as his price, to which Lord Bute demurred as being too high. Wilson replied that if the sum was more than the King cared to pay in a lump sum, he was prepared to take it in instalments. The result of this was that Wilson lost the patronage of the Court. (See *Dictionary of National Biography.*)

I find my friends here all kind and well as usual. John Allen swears he means to come into Suffolk: and Thackeray also:—so you will see the latter potentate in course of time. I saw Carlyle yesterday: he foams about Ireland at present: on Sunday I shall perhaps see him again.

My Father seems pretty well; my Mother remarkably so.

Don't you see how tardily my news retails itself? Shall I not quickly put an end to this worthless epistle?—I had a note from Mrs. Shawe inviting me to Kesgrave on Wednesday: but I was not *sure* of my return on that day. I was obliged to write "nay" in reply. But I *hope* to be done about the middle of the week. So now Goodbye for the present. Yrs E. F. G.

(Geldestone)
(*April 1st* 1847).

Dear Barton,

I would return your compliments in verse if I could do so by return of post. But my Muse is a slow coach.—In honest prose then let me foremost thank Miss Barton for her very handsome purse—and you for all your good wishes—

and your good verses; which, even in my character of Dennis, I must admit to be easy and pleasant as such verses should be.

Your allusion to the Pirate (at the end of your verses) makes me confess my peccadillo:—that the other night, being possessed with a desire to see what became of the Zetlanders, I hunted all over Kerrich's Library for the book: but (very properly, as you may think) did not find it—so I must even wait to finish the journey with you—I shall leave this place on Monday or Tuesday: be at Earl Soham for 2 days: and toward the end of the week, be in a condition (I hope) to read with you what remains to be read of the pleasant book—

You may imagine I have seen this house under happier circumstances than at present;—Kerrich is gone with his brother to London for a while: Eleanor has acted, and acts, with great sagacity and firmness—She has to learn to put off the yoke of submission to which she has so happily subjected herself for 20 years, and to be the *Master;* for a time at least:—a thing not agreeable to the good feminine nature:—but necessary here,—and in so many cases beside—Her present to me on my birthday was a pair of plain cloth

gloves! more touching to me, as coming out of the small funds of a large family, than if they were filled with gold—

And now farewell for the present, my dear Barton—Again let me thank Miss Barton for her royal purse: and believe me,

Yrs very truly,

EDWARD FITZGERALD.

(LONDON).
(*May* 8, 1847).

DEAR BARTON,

I suppose you have already concluded that (in spite of all my protestations) I really never do mean to go back to Suffolk. But still I verily do mean it: and moreover should be glad to be there now. But still I have not done all I wanted to do: and probably shall leave much undone—My books from the London Library are not got: your frame has not been inquired for; this and that friend has not been visited:—for what with the visits to some, and the visits of some to me, days and nights rolled away—I must go to Chelsea once more. I believe, to-morrow. I am to dine with the Woods, if possible, on Sunday—Major Moor is said by all to be better:

*much* better than he was this time 2 years. He is silent in company, but, they say, not *sad*. William Wood is going to stand for Oxford. A better member of Parl^t^ can not well be.

I find now that Alfred Tennyson is at his very dirty hotel in Leicester Square: filled with fleas and foreigners. He looks thin and ill: and no wonder, from his habits.—

Thus far I wrote yesterday: but a man came in: made me lay down my letter, and took up my time till I was forced to go out. And now things so fall out that you will get my letter on a Sunday: when perhaps you are most pleased to get it. As far as I see now, I mean to leave London on Monday; perhaps go for two days to Bedford: and then home. I am not yet clear about future Geldestone arrangements: but at present Kerrich and Eleanor are at Holbrook; he something better, they think.

Farewell for the present. Yrs. E. F. G.

In the autumn of this year FitzGerald paid some visits in the south-western counties. After leaving the house of an old college friend, a country clergyman in Dorsetshire, he wrote to Barton:

"I found the churches much occupied by Puseyite Parsons; new chancels built with altars, and painted windows that officially displayed the Virgin Mary, etc. The people in those parts call that party 'Pugicides' and receive their doctrine and doings peacefully."

LEAMINGTON—*Wednesday*
(*Sept.* 8. 1847)

MY DEAR BARTON,

Here I have been for near a week: to-morrow I go on my road to Bedford. In doing so, my face will be turned toward Suffolk:—which will be a comfort to me, as doubtless it will be to that county—Crabbe wrote me a letter:—but I thought I perceived in it marks of being written against the grain:—I don't mean, in anger:—but as if he were not in a cue to write at all. The sentences followed one another drop by drop, I thought—Great part of his letter was taken up by a tirade against Pickwick:—Pickwick was the scape-goat on whom Crabbe vented his discontent—I must get home, and with a violent onslaught, shake the blue devils out of him—

My Father and Mother are pretty well. This

place is really pleasant: the town lively without being full or showy; the country around green, with several points of interest within a few miles —Warwick Castle, Kenilworth, Stoneleigh, Stratford &c. The "*Pugicides*" flourish about here too, I see:—great dickeys![1] not seeing how they are running upon their own destruction— *The Morning Post* of yesterday tells of the Queen's residence in Scotland: and says the eyes of all the Scotch are bent to see if she will have Divine Service performed by a Clergyman of the Established Church next Sunday—For it appears that, last Sunday, no such dignitary was at hand: and the service was read by some layman: when, says the *Post*, the most important part of the service was left out; or of no effect: namely, that pretty piece of stuff called "*the Absolution*" which (says the *Post*) can have no effect unless delivered by one on whom the Power of Heaven has come by Apostolical Succession! So sings the *Post;* no great authority indeed:—but against that *Post* so many fine Ladies and Gentlemen rub themselves every morning over their breakfast—At Gloucester last Wednesday a gentleman got up into the pulpit,

[1] *Dickey* is East Anglian for donkey.

and told us he held the keys of St. Peter. Farewell. Direct to me at "Alderman Browne's, Bedford."

E. F. G.

(Bedford)
(*Sept.* 20. 1847).

My dear Barton,

I am just going off to a place near Kimbolton—to pay a visit—shall perhaps return here at the end of the week for a day or two:—and then I really do hope to be put in train homeward. You can, if you please, yet direct to me at Alderman Browne's—I am pressed to stand as *proxy for an absent Godfather* in behalf of a child of a high-Church Divine living near here:—as he is an old friend, I cannot well refuse him:—so I must officiate. Whether I shall be arrayed for the occasion in an *alb*, or a mitre, I don't know.—I have some wish to get a glimpse of Donne at Bury, in case I go home that way: but this is as yet uncertain. I don't know whether I shall have time to make a sketch of Goldington. I don't know whether, if I had time, my hand yet remembers its cunning sufficiently to draw the perspective of roof and gable. Churchyard should be here for the

purpose. You never mention him in your letters: yet I should be glad to hear that he is well, and also to know what he is about in the painting line. I have heard nothing from Moore: and conclude from this that he is gone abroad for a while. On the other hand, he may have sworn an eternal enmity against me, which is perhaps as probable as the other conclusion—

Autumn is come in good earnest—howling winds and pelting rains, and leaves that are already turned yellow, some of them: and some whirled away from the trees before their time—One begins now to think of one's Winter quarters—What book shall we read together of nights this Winter?

Was not Carlyle's letter a good one? I want him to see yet more of the English *country*, and I think he would modify some of his views—Doubtless all these impressions of Derbyshire will come out in print ere long: I can see by his letter that his thoughts are settling towards some such consummation.[1]

Farewell. Yrs. E. F. G.

[1] For FitzGerald's reply to this letter from Carlyle, see his letter dated 20 September, 1847, on p. 226 of *Letters of Edward FitzGerald* (1907 edition).

Bedford.
*Octr.* 5/47

My dear Barton,

You will think I am dead, or disgusted with all sublunary things. But neither is the case. I have been retrograding into Northamptonshire; to meet my Father and Mother at Naseby—And, since that, have had a correspondence on foot with my Father concerning my accompanying my Mother to Paris—This, however, I believe will *not* take place; but not wholly certain yet—You need not be surprised at all if you see me drop in upon you one evening at the latter end of this week;—for conveyances to Cambridge and Bury are so restricted and uncertain, that I know not if I shall not be obliged to give up my visits to those two places; and rush in one day's journey through London right to Woodbridge—I have delayed here so long, being pressed to do so for the pleasure of meeting with one of the members of the family, who has been coming home day after day for the last fortnight;—but who did *not* arrive till yesterday—

I have no news to tell you of any kind; nor are any hopeful epistolary ideas shooting in my head—which is sufficiently occupied with an

ache of its own—For yesterday I went out to a large, hot, noisy, dinner,—when I eat a wing of goose, with all its "*glory*" (which means (you know) the inside stuffing), and drank a heap of port, and smoked a great black cigar—Again, you see, I give no direction, whereby a letter from you may reach me: but peradventure I may ring at your bell just when you would be about to sit down to write, supposing you had got a direction—

So farewell—I have got a note from Ellis Walford who has named me as one of a Committee for the National Schools of Debach, Dollinghoo, and Charsfield—But I must see what is to be done before I accept the honour—

Yrs. ever,

E. FitzGerald.

Geldestone, Beccles.
*Wednesday.*
(*Jany.*—1848)

Dear Barton,

You will be surprized to find me dating from this place. George Crabbe offered me a ride in his gig to Beccles; so I came hither to pay a long-promised visit—

But I write to you for a further purpose—I told *Camston* that, if it were not convenient

to return to Woodbridge by *Thursday* (to-morrow) I would play a hymn for him, if necessary, on the evening of that day—Now, Camston may have written to me to ask me to do so; and I am out of the reach of doing what I am engaged to do. Now I want Miss Barton to be so very kind as to cause enquiry to be made at Camston's house *whether he be returned*, and, if he be not back, whether a hymn is wanted to-morrow evening, and, lastly, if it be wanted, I want her to fulfil my promise for me, and play the needful, as she has done before—She can easily suit the boys with one of the hymns played last Sunday: with "Nottingham" for instance—And also with one of the *Chaunts*, if that be also requisite—

I did not remember what I had engaged to do till this morning: nor do I hurry back to do it (if it is to be done) because I know she *can* do it as well for me; and I think she will—Let me hear of you, and of all this—

Yrs. E. F. G.

GELDESTONE—*Jan*$^{y}$ 8.
(1848)

DEAR BARTON,

Pray thank Miss Barton for so kindly undertaking the organ for me. I should not

have left Boulge, had I remembered my promise before I set out. But it had not been clenched in my head by positive acceptance: on the contrary the people at Camston's house told me he probably would be home on Wednesday. But all is well that ends well. I have no doubt Miss Barton got on well: and that her concluding *squawk* was not worse than my introductory one—

Sam of Oxford deserves all ridicule; and I hope will get it. I wrote again to Wilkinson to advise him to get up an address of encouragement to Lord John. For if my Lord is sincere in his professions, he ought to be thanked; if he is not, he ought to be made to see that it is worth his while to be sincere—

I have just construed a long speech in Thucydides, to the great trouble of my eyes: and I am now going to talk nonsense to the children—Write your autobiography if you will:—but think twice before you publish it.

I enclose a cheque, which be kind enough to send, and *let me hear directly* if it is honoured—In these times, this is not so certain.

I hope to be home by this day week.

Ever yrs.

E.F.G.

FitzGerald's attitude towards the Oxford Movement, which was then exciting so much controversy throughout the country, is as interesting as it is unexpected. From remarks let fall here and there in his letters, it is evident that his feeling of veneration for the Church of England was deep-seated. He felt strongly, however, that the Ritualistic movement, then gathering headway, would, unless checked, bring the Established Church to destruction. One cannot but suspect that the beauty of the language of the liturgies in the *Book of Common Prayer* made strong appeal to his æsthetic sense, yet he was prepared to suffer them to be annulled rather than that by their retention the Church should stand in danger. FitzGerald's conservative instinct forbade him to regard with complaisance any disruptive change in established custom. He would doubtless have preferred to let the liturgies and rubrics stand, and have relied upon the good sense of the clergy gradually to eliminate the abuses that the Tractarians sought to remove by regeneration. But the Tractarians rested the justification of their arguments upon the letter of the liturgies and rubrics, so, in FitzGerald's

opinion, they must be sacrificed. He lived more than long enough to see that his fear was groundless.

Lying loose among the letters was found the following address, couched in the form of a petition, to Lord John Russell, the then Premier. The style of the address[1] and the concluding appeal in behalf of the Irish people point to FitzGerald as its probable author. Judging by what he says in the foregoing letter, he appears to have found difficulty in persuading his brother-in-law, the Rev. J. B. Wilkinson, to take such action as FitzGerald deemed it his duty to take, so perhaps he drafted this petition himself, had it printed, and sent copies to Wilkinson, Barton, and other friends. Whether signatures were ever obtained to the document, and whether it was forwarded to the Premier, the correspondence does not tell. It is conceivable that FitzGerald's clerical brother-in-law would have felt prudential scruples against subscribing his name to a petition comprising such sweeping suggestions, notwithstanding the redeeming tolerance of its tone.

[1] Compare the style of the petition with that of the concluding sentence to the introduction of the *Rubaiyat*—for instance.

To the Right Honourable Lord John Russell

My Lord,

We, the undersigned, being deeply attached to the Protestant Faith, have seen with sorrow the Pope's recent creation of a Roman Hierarchy in England.

But, in tracing this act to its cause, we are compelled to admit,—1st.—That this advance of the Pope's results less from any unusual aggression on his part, than from some unusual invitation from ourselves; so many Ministers of the Church of England (encouraged by some Bishops) having been so long and so loudly proclaiming the essential Unity of the Church of England with that of Rome; practising some of Rome's vain Ceremonies; advocating some of her most dangerous Doctrines, such as Auricular Confession; the Power of Regeneration, Sanctification, and Absolution, residing in the Priest; and, finally, by going themselves, and drawing many of their people, over to the Church to which they had striven to liken their own.

But—(2ndly)—these persons have in many instances sheltered themselves from effectual

reprehension under certain words in the Liturgy and Rubric of the Church of England, which seem to authorize such doctrines and practices; words which wiser men had long looked on as dead-letter remnants of the Popish ritual from which that of England was drawn,—words whose mischievous tendency when quickened into life is sufficiently testified in the events we are deploring.

The evil being thus traced home to the Liturgy of the Church of England, we venture to suggest to your Lordship, that here the cure of the evil ought to begin; such words in the Liturgy or Rubric as have given countenance to these errors being removed, so as to prevent any like danger for the future from foolish or designing men. For, of all Churches, it seems proper that one which is established by *Law* in a Country, and its support made in some measure compulsory on a whole people, ought to be as pure as human wisdom can make it—certainly not by some words so easily removed give countenance to the worst errors, and draw foreign interference upon us.

And this seems the proper time to effect this, and any other Reform in the Church which may

seem good; the feeling of the Country being so manifestly aroused against the intrusion of the Pope, or any practices at home that lead to it.

And believing, as we do, that the security of a Religion lies in its own purity, and in the sincerity of the People professing it, not in any legislative enactments against other Religions; we hope that no restrictions which the milder policy of late years has removed from the Roman Catholics will be reimposed upon them, at least until some more injurious effects follow this measure of the Pope's than the mere assumption of empty Titles.

And, considering besides that, while exclaiming against the Pope's invasion of her Hierarchic Titles, Protestant England has appropriated not only the Titles, but the Revenues, of Papal Ireland; we further beg to suggest to your Lordship if such Honours and Revenues may not be more equitably distributed, according to the claims of the Irish people; either by returning them in part to their original owners, or so disposing them in Protestant hands as better to secure the advance of a purer Faith.

(Geldestone)
(*Jany* 13. 1848)

My dear Barton,

I am rather surprized not to hear from you by this time—I sent you a letter last Saturday, enclosing a cheque on Coutts; of whose acceptance I wished to have the earliest tidings —Doubtless you have very good reason for not writing yet about that; but how comes your pen (usually so ready) to falter in its correspondence on other less worldly matters?—

I desire to be home on Saturday, but am not quite sure I shall be able to get off; as there are birthdays in the wind:—but I shall positively get away if I can—All have colds here—influenzas— I have hitherto escaped the contagion; but I fancy I feel "hot-and-dry-in-the-mouth-like"[1] today—Anyhow, will you give me a line by return of post, to say if you have any news for me;—at least to say you have received my letter of last Saturday. I hope you are not *unwell*—

I have had a long letter from E. Cowell this morning; full of Persian and Sanscrit quotations. His wife had had the influenza, in common with all the world, but she is now getting well, he says

[1] A Suffolkism.

—My Father and Mother both suffer from it in Paris;—but the disease has not been so mortal there as in London, they say.

Today, the sun shines, and the air is warmer; and Spring seems taking a first peep at the world—

And now I must go out; and so goodbye for a little while.

Yrs. E.F.G.

GELDESTONE
(*Jany* 18. 1848)

MY DEAR BARTON,

You will accuse me of my usual uncertainty in being here now, when I should be at Boulge. The truth is, however, that a severe cold, or Influenza, which has been going through this house, and which I have been staving off for some days came upon me with such violence on Sunday, that I gave up all thought of going yet—It is better to have this sort of illness where a *little* company is: I am so heavy in the head and eyes I can scarce read; so I get the children to read to me—Such are the joys of a Bachelor's life—

You will have, I believe, a note from my

Father about paying me £100—For I wrote to him about the deficit at Coutt's instantly: and he does not wholly understand how it is; since he desired the Quarterly dividends to be paid to Coutts by the 10th of this month—But of all this when I see you. I shall be home before the end of the week, unless my cold be very obdurate: at present I am fit for nothing but to loll in a chair—

Yrs ever E. F. G.

I see they put my letter into the *Ipswich Journal.*

On February 26, 1848, Major Moor, the old friend of FitzGerald and Barton, died. Shortly after his death there appeared in the *Ipswich Journal* some slipshod tributary verses composed by Barton, and tacked on to these was the following postscript:—

Lines from the German.

The following translation from the poems of Ludwig Uhland embodies so striking a portrait of the subject of the preceding Memorial that, by permission of its translator, I fill my remaining page with it.

Had the departed spirits but the power
To visit yet again their earthly Homes,
So wouldst thou come once more, but not when sheds
The paley moon her mournful influence,
When heaviness and longing only wake.
No! when a gentle summer moon descends,
When all a golden sea the harvest waves—
Woven throughout with blossoms red and blue;
Then wouldst thou wander thro' the ripen'd fields,
Greeting, as erst, each reaper with a smile.

J. H. G.

The translator was probably John Hudson Gurney—a friend and benefactor of Barton. The original lines, by Uhland, are entitled *Auf den Tod eines Landgeistlichen* ("On the death of a country clergyman"), and are as follows:

Bleibt abgeschieden Geistern die Gewalt,
Zu kehren nach dem ird'schen Aufenthalt,
So kehrest du nicht in der Mondennacht,
Wann nur die Sehnsucht und die Schwermuth wacht.
Nein! wann ein Sommermorgen nieder steigt,
Wo sich in weiten Blau kein Wolkchen zeigt,
Wo hoch und golden sich die Ernte hebt,
Mit rothen, blauen Blumen hell durchwebt,
Dann wandelst du, wie einst, durch das Gefild
Und grüssest jeden Schnitter freundlich mild.

The words which conveyed "so striking a portrait" of Major Moor to Barton's, as well as to FitzGerald's, mind, are those which form the two concluding lines of this graceful little German poem. The vision of Major Moor moving among the workers in his cornfields was one so dear to FitzGerald that we find him recording it tenderly a whole decade later in a letter to Mrs. Cowell, who was then in India.

"Also I shall send you dear Major Moor's *Oriental Fragments;* an almost worthless Book, I doubt, to those who did not know him! And somehow all of us in our corner of Suffolk knew something of him; and so again loved something of him. For there was nothing at all about him not to be beloved. Ah! I think how interested he would have been with all this Persian:[1] and how we should have disputed over parts and expressions over a glass of his Shiraz wine (for he had some) in his snug Parlour, or in his Cornfields when the Sun fell upon the latest Gleaners."

Lying among the letters on a sheet of note paper there was found the following attempt to

[1] Referring to the frequent letters he was exchanging with Professor Cowell at this period on Persian poetry.

put Uhland's poem into Sonnet form. The script is in FitzGerald's handwriting:—

Could the departed spirit reassume
  Its mortal shape, and, by some special grace,
Visit again its earthly dwelling place,
Even so mightst thou,—not in the total gloom
Of Midnight, nor as in the Watcher's room
  When the full moon lights up mysterious space,
  Wouldst thou reveal thyself with livid face
Wrapt in the dead apparel of the tomb—
No—rather on some autumn morning fair
When under the blue Heaven clear of cloud
The golden flood of harvest wav'd and bowed
  Scatter'd with scarlet poppies here and there,
Thou might'st wandering through the field awhile
Greet as of old each reaper with a smile.

This sonnet, which shows by the numerous alterations in the manuscript that its construction had given some trouble, was perhaps a joint composition of FitzGerald and Barton. It is probable that at first they deemed Gurney's unrhymed translation too rough in form for publication, but that, being dissatisfied with the sonnet, they finally resolved to publish Gurney's version of the poem.

GELDESTONE—*Saturday*
(*April 8th* 1848)

MY DEAR BARTON,

Behold your Sunday letter—I have spent a very pleasant week here with my delightful nieces—so simple-minded, affectionate, and open to all innocent pleasure. Here I am like the Father of a delightful family, without the responsibilities attached—These girls are now all grown up, or growing up; *ladies* in the only true sense of the word: finding their luxury in going among the poor: and doing what good they can—

I wait here till Tuesday: and then, if Mrs. Faiers be well enough to receive me, shall fly to her arms. And here you can perhaps do me a little service. As how?—Why, I wrote yesterday to Vignati to beg him to let me know if my *Matron* were well enough to receive me; but I hear today that Vignati is gone to London: —nay, talks of going to Italy: So, if you should happen to see Jones tomorrow (Sunday) would you ask him whether he can give a bulletin of Mrs. F.'s recovery: and will you give me a line (also tomorrow) to convey his report?—

We had indeed wondrous weather here for the first three days of my stay: but in this house one is independent of weather. Kerrich is pretty well. Eleanor so-so—This morning I read some of my old friend Sir Charles Grandison in bed—the old "Cedar Parlour"--It is a curious history of old manners: but we are greatly improved since—You see people are all agog as to what the Chartists are to do on Monday:—I think, nothing. Ireland gets worse and worse—

Farewell

E. F. G.

CAMBRIDGE. *Sunday*
(*April 17th.* 1848)

MY DEAR BARTON,

You will not get a Sunday letter from me, but a Tuesday one, as I suppose. I got to Bury on Friday: found I could not get on to Cambridge that day: so abode at Donne's, who is well and bonny: came here early yesterday: my brother gone; so here I wait till tomorrow, when I return to Bury, and stay with Donne till Thursday:—when he goes to London. And then I shall most likely return home;—only I would be glad if, amid your business, you could

give me a line to assure me from Jones' mouth whether my housekeeper be fairly well again. I do not wish to return till she be: and I will go on and pay my London visit rather than importune the old Lady—so pray let me know the plain truth: not hopes, or wishes—(N.B. This sarcasm is aimed at Mrs. Gunn, not at Mr. Barton) —Donne is going to take me to see Sir Joshua's portrait of Lady Sarah Banbury, when I return to Bury—And now my paper is done, and I am yours ever

E. F. G.

(*London*)
(*May 18th* 1848)

DEAR BARTON,

Will you kindly send me hither a Post Office order, or cheque (whichever is proper) for £5? I shall be home on Friday or Saturday: and so will beg of you a note by return of post.

All my friends are in London, I believe, but I have seen no one as yet except Spedding and Moore—not even Alfred the Great—who is up—I have also seen and heard the famous Jenny Lind:—who we will talk over.

Yrs E. F. G.

(London)
(*May 20th* 1848)

My dear Barton,

Thank you very much for your letter, and its contents. I am not yet able to leave town: and have now just completed two letters on Trustee business, of which I want to see the upshot, ere I leave. You will soon know, perhaps, what I have been busied about here. I have just time to write this scrap; which you will get for your Sunday breakfast. I saw Carlyle and Thackeray yesterday:—both as usual.

Yrs E. F. G.

Bedford. *August:* 13/48

My dear Barton,

I got your friendly letter last night—thank you for it—My Father has protection at least as far as all the debts contained in the Schedule are—more I know not—

I shall return to London before the end of this week, and shall then remain there, or run down to Boulge before the sale. I should not mind being there during the sale for my own part:—but other people might be embarrassed by my presence.

As to my future residence, that also is yet

uncertain—This diminution of wealth and reputation would make not the slightest difference to me; but I doubt about remaining in the centre of so many creditors, who must always look to me, *in some measure*, for help which I cannot, or will not, give. I have disposed of my own Bond to the best advantage I can for *three* creditors, who, I thought, most needed it; and I am determined to draw the line there—I shall do all I can to push my Father's petition through, *not* for his sake, poor man: but for that of his Creditors; who are the only party I feel very much pity for.

I wrote yesterday to Churchyard who perhaps will tell you some of my plans and doings—not much to tell of. I am now here consulting with my practical and mercantile friends concerning the raising of a small sum of money on my reversion; very little will content my wants—I should perhaps sell the whole reversion at once; —but I wish to leave it to others who will, I hope, make better use of it than I myself shall, or any Annuity Office would, put it to.

Farewell for the present.

Yrs ever

E. FitzGerald.

London. *Saturday*
(*Sept 9th* 1848)

Dear Barton,

Your Sunday's breakfast!—here is my contribution: which must be a small one—as I have 20 places to go to.

I suppose you will have heard of our Creditors' meeting on Thursday: a room in the City filled with miserable, avaricious, hungry, angry, degraded, cunning, faces—amid them *Wilkinson*,[1] like the good man in a den of thieves—attorney Ward's sharp voice grinding disreputable reports and surmises—a drunken green-grocer clamouring for two years' pay &c. Wilkinson told me afterward that he was on the point of getting up to open the meeting with prayer, a thought to fill the eyes with tears—

Of the result, all I can say is that, so far so well—All depends on a meeting on the 4th October; which I shall help on as much as I can —I do so because I am convinced it is best for the Creditors, who are the *only* party I consider—

I am now going to Bedford to see about the raising of some money—But I shall soon be

[1] FitzGerald's brother-in-law.

back in Suffolk; where I want to be to push on affairs. I believe Boulge furniture will be sold—

I have seen no one in London but Lawyers and Creditors and the one poor Debtor—

Farewell. Yrs E.F.G.

19 Charlotte St.
Rathbone Place
(*29th Octr.* 1848)

Dear Barton

You see I am in old quarters: and thence indite you a few inane lines for your Sunday's breakfast—The thing that most weighs on my mind is the loss of the only good coat I had in the world: a blue one with gold buttons—I have missed it for some time: Mrs. Faiers knew not of it; I hoped to have found it here; but do not find it; and where I have left it I cannot tell. I shall not get a new one before Xmas, I believe: so my friends must suffer by the sight of the seedy old one. They are the only sufferers, what is it to me?—

I find old Spedding up here; and tonight I rather intend to go to Chelsea, to consult the oracle there. But this will depend. Laurence has gone down to Beccles for some days.

Thackeray I have not heard of: but have shot off a line to apprize him of my being here.

Is it some *coffee* I am to get at Freshwater's, ask Miss Barton?—and what is the name of the coffee?—Also, have you any other commissions?

I scarcely know how our affairs are going on—for my own private business I am negociating a rather successful Annuity out of my Reversionary property—So my friends tell me; indeed, they are managing it for me—but all may drop to the ground.

Yrs ever E. F. G.

(London)
(*Nov. 4th* 1848)

Dear Barton,

Instead of myself at your Breakfast table tomorrow, behold my letter. I hope to be down before the end of next week, however—I stop here chiefly to see *Frederic* Tennyson, who is just off again to Florence, where he will be absent another 5 years perhaps. He entreats me much to go with him: and I am foolish not to do so, for this winter—But I suppose it will end in my not going—Alfred is also here, having just emerged from the water-process at Malvern.

He now drinks a bottle of wine a day, and smokes as before; a sure way to throw back in a week or two all the benefit (if benefit there were) which resulted from many weeks of privation and penance—

I can scarcely give you an accurate account of our proceedings at the meeting of Creditors on Wednesday—The proceedings that had taken 4 months to arrange were totally abandoned: and never begun—But with their mode of operation, and probable success, I am almost unacquainted —I shall yet meddle a little perhaps: and then have done with the business—

Thank you for your little view of Aldbro. Isabella is now located there; I saw the Signor in London just before his departure hence to join her.

I went one evening to Carlyle's: he lectured on without intermission for 3 hours: was very eloquent, looked very handsome: and I was very glad to get away. He gave an account of a Quaker who had come to remonstrate with him concerning certain doctrines about Peace &c.— "when" (said Carlyle) "I went on with a deluge of hot matter like what I have been pouring out to you, till I almost calcined my poor Quaker—

Ah me!"[1] Fancy *Frederic* gradually dissolving under the fiery torrent—

Yrs ever E. F. G.

(LONDON)
(*Nov:* 11*th* 1848)

MY DEAR BARTON,

I am so late today, I have but time to write ten lines before post. The reason is, that A. Tennyson, having only 2 days ago set off with his brother to *Florence*, re-appeared in my rooms this day at noon, and has usurped my day till now that it is 5 o'clock. I have packed him off with a friend to dine; and have ten minutes to write to you, and another man.

I must be here till the middle of next week certainly; as I have my own money loans to settle; and lawyers at least are in no hurry. I have no news of other transactions.

[1] It seems probable that Carlyle was relating the incident of his meeting with John Bright at Manchester in the previous year. His account of the meeting is thus described in a letter to his wife dated Sept. 13, 1847:—

"But John Bright, the Anti-Corn law member, who had come across to meet me, with his cock nose and pugnacious eyes & Barclay-Fox-Quaker collar—John & I discorded in our views not a little. And, in fact, the result was that I got to talking occasionally in the Annandale acent, & communicated large masses of my views to the Brights and Brightesses as with a passing earthquake; and, I doubt, left a very questionable impression of myself there!"

I have bought you a *silver mug*, to drink porter out of—it will not hold enough to hurt you. And I have bought a plaster *statuetie* of Dante for Miss Barton to put up over her bookshelf.

Yrs in desperate haste

E. F. G.

(London)
(*Dec 2nd* 1848)

My dear Barton,

I was just on the point of forgetting to send you your weekly dole, in the hurry of starting off to visit my Mother at Brighton—I am just going off: my brother Peter bearing me company. He has been staying with me this last week—And who should walk into my rooms on Thursday night but George Crabbe;—to whom I have also given bed and board (such as it was) till today:—when he returns to his parish duties—I have enjoyed his visit much; and, odd to say, felt a twinge at his going away—Last night we were at Thackeray's, who gave us all good things—good company included.

I shall be at Brighton till Wednesday: then return here, when I *hope* to find my law matters forward toward completion—Edward Cowell

proposes to be in London about the same time, when I am to shew him two literary lions, in the persons of A. Tennyson, & Carlyle—the latter of whom is more rabid than ever—

I had a nice note from Job Smith this morning: he reports all well at Boulge, both in family and parish—I suppose Miss Barton's Dante has got to his new home by this time: has been resuscitated from his coffin, and promoted to another and a better locality—This puts me in mind of Meller; who puts me in mind of the transitoriness of earthly things—rail carriage among them—& I must be off with Peter—so farewell—Ever yrs

E. F. G.

This was the last letter FitzGerald wrote to Barton. Six weeks later he returned to Boulge, and in a letter to Donne dated December 27, 1848, he wrote:

"I only returned home a few days ago to spend Christmas with Barton, whose turkey I accordingly partook of. He seems only partly well: is altered during the last year: less spirits, less strength; but quite amiable still."

FitzGerald appears to have remained at Boulge throughout the winter, perhaps so as to be near his old and ailing friend, whose days he knew were numbered. On February 9, 1849, he wrote to Laurence:

"Barton is out of health: some affection of the heart, I think, that will never leave him, never let him be what he was when you saw him. He is forced to be very abstemious . . . but he bears his illness quite as a man; and looks very demurely to the necessary end of all life."

Ten days later the Quaker poet died very suddenly, leaving his daughter little other heritage than the small house they had occupied so happily together, and the books and pictures within it.

After Barton's death FitzGerald stayed at Boulge for some months to give Miss Barton a helping hand in editing the *Letters and Poems* of her father, a book to which he contributed the well-known Memoir. It was during this time that he plighted his troth to her. Nothing definite is known as to what impelled FitzGerald to take this step. They had both passed their

fortieth year: she a few months the senior. In point of intellect, culture, benevolence, and address, Lucy Barton was doubtless attractive, but she lacked physical charms. Her features were heavy, she was tall and big of bone, and her voice was loud and deep.[1] The key of the puzzle is probably to be found in FitzGerald's quixotic temperament.

Reading between the lines of the fragmentary records now available, the sequence of events leading up to the marriage seem to have been as follows.

FitzGerald relates in the Memoir that Barton suffered some loss of his slender means during the last year of his life, and that this misfortune and his failing health combined to make his mind uneasy respecting the future welfare of his beloved daughter. We may safely guess that FitzGerald's compassionate nature moved him to comfort his troubled friend with an assurance that he would keep watch over her interests and protect her from harm.

When Barton's small estate had been realised

[1] In her old age she gave one the impression of being a strong-minded woman. The habitual expression on her face was a pleasing medley of humour and shrewdness.

FitzGerald saw clearly that it did not provide enough to support her, and, faithful to the assurance he had given some months previously to his ailing friend, he impetuously offered to make up the deficiency from his own income. Such an offer her sense of propriety forbade her to accept.—One can imagine the effect of her refusal upon a temperament so sensitive as FitzGerald's. He accused himself of having committed an indelicacy—a breach of good taste. His disordered fancy prompted him to believe that he had grossly outraged the feelings of his old companion's daughter by offering her money. The thought was intolerable to him. He must make amends at any cost. And so, heedless of the consequences, he proposed marriage, and she—blind to the distraction of mind that had impelled him—accepted his offer.

Their joint incomes not being sufficient to enable them to marry forthwith, Lucy Barton accepted an invitation from her father's friend, Hudson Gurney—the wealthy antiquary and verse writer—to go as companion to his grand-nieces. She accordingly took up her abode at his house near Norwich, where she remained for the following seven years. It was not until

then that the death of a near relative of FitzGerald, towards whose support he had been contributing, left him in a position to marry. Both he and Lucy Barton must have undergone some change during those seven years. They were both approaching their fiftieth year—a period of life when the mind loses pliancy. The date and place of the wedding were chosen, and FitzGerald, who had kept secret his engagement for all these years, now announced it to his intimate friends. Judging by the tone of the following reply from Carlyle, it would appear that at this time FitzGerald had become cheerfully reconciled to the prospect of marriage.

CHELSEA. 18 *Octr.* 1856.

DEAR FITZGERALD,

I am delighted at the news! There was a faint semi-invisible hint at such a thing in your former letter, but nobody, except myself, would take it; even my Wife was blind; and Donne, to whom I cautiously insinuated such a question, the other day, pleaded ignorant,—tho', he said, there had been for years back some rumour (unfounded, at least quite uncertain, rumour) of the kind, in reference to—the very Lady who

now turns out to be the veritable Fact! For the rest his character of her was at once credible and superlatively favourable. Indeed it is difficult to fancy, if she resemble the picture of her Father (as drawn by Laurence, you, and the written documents in rhyme and otherwise) that Miss Barton can be other than an eligible Wife. You may fairly look forward to a Home in this world henceforth such as you have not had before, and might very easily have missed ever to have. In all which I am the more interested as I hope to see said Home, with my own eyes, some day or other, and to have a kind of vested interest in the same for the rest of my time. I will say only, long may you live, and see and do good in the land, you and the amiable Life-Partner you are now to have. And may the gods "send never worse among us!" as our Scotch people pray. . . .

Happiness be with you always, dear F.

Yours sincerely

T. CARLYLE

The marriage took place at Chichester in November, 1856, this place having been chosen for the reason that Lucy Barton's nearest rela-

tives lived in the neighbourhood. FitzGerald detested fuss and ceremony. He would have preferred to undergo the impending ordeal without the conventional accompaniments of bridesmaids and a wedding breakfast. Not so the bride and her relations, whose sense of decorum forbade them to waive the customary ritual. But they were powerless to prevent him wearing on the occasion his slouch hat and every day apparel. It is recorded that on the fateful day he looked like a victim being led to his doom. He walked by her side as one walking in his sleep, mute, and with head bowed. One of those who was present at the wedding breakfast has related that he only spoke once during the repast. Being offered some white blancmange, he waved it away with a gesture of disgust, uttering half audibly: "Ugh! congealed bridesmaid!"

Immediately after the wedding the ill-starred pair left Chichester for Brighton, where they stayed for some weeks. It seems probable that FitzGerald was willing to continue the partnership provided that he were not expected to give up his acquired bachelor ways and habits. If he wished to be left alone, she must not urge him to

be present at her tea parties. He would smoke whenever and wherever he liked. Above all, it was no concern of hers if he chose to wear old clothes of unfashionable cut, or to go unshaved.

"The most ordinary cause of a single life," says Francis Bacon, "is liberty; especially in certain self-pleasing and humorous minds, which are so sensible of every restraint, as they will go near to think their girdles and garters to be bonds and shackles."

So it was with FitzGerald. He probably never told her in so many words of his intention to follow his bent. He was by nature reserved. If anything irked him, his inclination was to shun it in silence. Her nature was of the contrary kind: she was outspoken, prim, and deliberate. She had a liking for the social amenities—an inclination which had doubtless been fostered during the seven years she lived with the Hudson Gurneys. She adored him, and the more she tried in her fond, tactless way to win his regard, the more she repelled him. And so it inevitably came about during the few weeks they were at Brighton that day by

day they drifted further apart. When at last the scales fell from her eyes, the disappointment was greater than she could bear; her health broke down, and in mid-December, 1856, she left him, to stay with friends of hers on the coast of Norfolk.

FitzGerald quitted Brighton immediately after her departure and went to London, there to isolate himself in his old lodgings in Gt. Portland St. for the following five weeks. To counteract the misery of his mind, he worked during these weeks incessantly at Persian. Then his wife rejoined him; rooms were taken overlooking Regent's Park, and the sadly futile effort to live in partnership began again. In a long sad letter to Cowell, who was then in India, he wrote:

"I have now been five weeks alone at my old Lodgings in London where you came last year! My wife in Norfolk. She came up yesterday; and we have taken lodgings for two months in the Regents Park."

The letter concluded with these sorrowful words: "Goodbye my dear Friends! . . . Farewell. Write to me; direct—whither? For till I see better how we get on I dare fix on no place to

live or die in." They remained in London throughout the Spring,—he still absorbed in old Persian poetry—the *Rubaiyat* in particular: she eating her heart out with grief and mortification.

The tragic dilemma remained unsolved only a few weeks longer. Before midsummer they mutually agreed that separation was the only way out of the difficulty. He settled a generous annuity upon her, and they parted for ever.

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